

THE
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MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. BENJAMIN
DAVIES,

OF HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE.

THE subject of this memoir was born in the town of Fishguard, in the county of Pembroke. His parents, who knew the grace of God in truth, were members of the Baptist church at Llangloffan, and watched with Christian solicitude over the morals of their children. Having endeavoured to discharge their duty in training up their offspring in the ways of righteousness, their solicitude was graciously relieved by witnessing the power of Divine grace operating on the soul of their beloved Benjamin. At the early age of 15 years, it pleased the Almighty to call him out of darkness into marvellous light, under the ministry of the Rev. Maurice Jones, the present pastor of the Baptist church of Ebenezer, at Merthyr. What the peculiar feelings of his mind were, at the commencement of his spiritual course, is not exactly known; but having felt the power of regenerating grace, and having devoted himself to God in the ordinance of baptism, he was desirous of making known to others what God had done for his soul. He had no sooner begun to exercise the gifts which heaven had entrusted to his charge, than

his extraordinary *zeal* and *devotion* attracted the attention of the church of which he was a member, and giving fair promise of extensive usefulness in the vineyard of his Lord: he was accordingly placed under the tuition of the Rev. Dr. Evans, tutor of the Baptist seminary in Bristol. During the period allowed for academical pursuits, nothing was more conspicuous in him than that *diligence*, *zeal*, and *devotion*, which adorn the humble and active minister of God. The flame which had just discovered itself in his native country, fed by literary pursuits, and fanned by the breath of heaven, burnt with increasing ardour, attracted the attention of several destitute churches, and, ere the period allowed for academic seclusion expired, various congregations earnestly solicited the benefit of his labours. Unaspiring in his disposition, retirement suited him; and the seclusion of a village had irresistible attractions. Accrington, in Lancashire, first enjoyed the benefit of his stated labours: the church there being destitute of a minister, (and the place presenting a considerable field for usefulness,) he was induced

to comply with its solicitations, and was ordained pastor over it. Soon after this event, he married Miss Mary Owen, of Dennant, in his native county. At Accrington his success was considerable: sinners were awakened, saints were edified, the church increased in numbers, and the pastor and his flock were nourished with the dews of heaven. But, whilst thus cheered with success in his work, several circumstances transpired which operated on his mind, and, at length, induced him to return to his native county. The success of religion in Pembrokeshire had never ceased to interest his soul; the increasing infirmities of Mrs. Davies's aged parents, which rendered her presence necessary, together with the destitute state of the Baptist church at Molleston, (which had just sent him a pressing solicitation to become their minister,) rested with such weight upon his mind, that he felt obliged to resign his charge in Lancashire. At this period, the conflict of his soul was exceedingly severe: anxious to enjoy the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he wrestled much with his Creator for direction, earnestly praying, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." The Lord gave him direction: he appears to have returned to his native county in the "fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Chris." Scarcely had he commenced his ministerial labours at Molleston, ere the Divine Being afforded him new proofs of his favour, pointing the truths he delivered, to the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, and to the building up of believers in their most holy faith. But his labours were not confined to Molleston: in Haverfordwest a few persons of the Baptist per-

suation resided, whom he beheld as sheep having no shepherd; he adopted them as part of his charge, and in season and out of season he laboured for their good. For years did this zealous disciple continue to supply these separate branches of his charge every Sabbath, although ten miles distant from each other; and so indefatigable was he in his exertions, that scarcely an evening passed throughout the year, without his being engaged in the work of his beloved Master. In Haverford, the Almighty greatly owned his labours, and it was soon discovered that the house in which he preached was much too small to contain the number of his followers. In the year 1788, a respectable friend of his, (although of different sentiments on the subject of baptism,) kindly offered to accommodate him with money for the purchase of land, and the erection of a meeting-house, if a spot suitable for the purpose could be obtained. Divine Providence soon presented it to view; and, in the year 1789, a considerable meeting-house was erected and opened; new seals were given to his ministry, and the pleasure of the Lord was seen prospering in his hand. The number of converts continued to increase in Haverford; until, in the year 1798, it was deemed expedient to form them into a separate church: this event had no sooner taken place, than those disinterested principles, which had before excited admiration, shone forth with increasing splendour; for he immediately relinquished the charge of the church at Molleston, (which had afforded him some remuneration for his labours,) and became pastor of the infant church at Haverford, in which he had no prospect of

any immediate recompense beside the Divine blessing. This reward he enjoyed in an eminent degree: the place of worship was constantly crowded; the church prospered; and at the time of his decease, the number of its members had increased to nearly 200. In his preaching, doctrine, experience, and primitive simplicity, weresweetly mingled. In his sentiments he was liberal, and believers of all denominations found a ready welcome beneath his roof; the hungry were fed, the desponding comforted, and the necessitous relieved. In his life, he appears always to have kept in view the example of him who was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*; and to have clearly followed him in going about doing good. About five years before his decease, his health began to decline; symptoms of asthma appeared, which at last terminated in water on the chest; yet he continued to publish the word of life, until disease completely disabled him, and gave him intimation of a speedy dismissal from his labours. About six months before his decease, he was obliged to relinquish his pulpit exercises; and this he did under a full persuasion that his work was done. On a friend suggesting to him the possibility of recovery, he said, "*Oh, no!* If God saw fit to restore me, he would bless the means used for my recovery; but my work is done, and glory be to his name. I am not without my reward in this life, for my consolations are neither few nor small. I know in whom I have believed, and he is able to keep me; and though I descend to the valley of death, he will be with me. He has the keys of death and hell at his girdle: the one cannot arrest till he com-

mands; the other cannot open its mouth to destroy, while I have his merits to plead. Oh! who can fathom the love of Jesus? It passeth knowledge." About three weeks before his death, his pains were exceedingly violent; yet the greater his sufferings, the more abundant were his consolations. His own language gives the best idea of the satisfaction he then experienced: "To go to your Father, and to my Father, to your God and to my God, O what joy I feel!"

• Welcome sweet hour of full discharge,
That sets my longing soul at large;
Unbinds my chains, breaks up my cell,
And gives me with my God to dwell."

And then with tears of inexpressible delight, and a countenance beaming seraphic animation, he exclaimed, "Thy presence, O Lord, overwhelms me; it is more than I can bear: this poor earthen vessel is running over! Glory, glory, glory be unto thy name!" Just afterward, a friend coming in, he said, "You are come too late for our joys, but you are no stranger to them; the Captain of my salvation was made perfect through suffering, and blessed be his name, he leadeth me on to conquest and a crown. What should I have done now, if (after having preached to others for nearly 40 years), I had not his consolations; *he is my way, my truth, and my life*, and I am his. For years I have never feared the consequences of death, but oftentimes the pains; but, blessed be his name, he takes the pains away." Perfectly sensible of the near approach of death, about ten days before his dissolution, he expressed a desire that his family might be called around his bed, in order that he might once more address them: and on being informed that all were pre-

sent, he, with an emphasis which will never be forgotten, said, "My dear children, I charge you, in the presence of that God before whom I must shortly appear, that ye walk in the strait and narrow path; that not one of you be found at the left hand of the Judge in the great day: how can I endure the thought, that either of my dear children should be for ever under the wrath of God, or forced to dwell in everlasting burnings. I have exhorted you, and prayed often for you, but my prayers are nearly ended; you must now pray for yourselves. O strive to enter in at the strait gate, and let me entreat you to be decided for the Lord. One thing more I have to say to you: very soon you will have but one parent; I charge you with my dying breath, be kind to her; do every thing you can to make her comfortable. Attend to her counsel, for she will never advise you to any thing but what will tend to your comfort here, and your happiness hereafter." On the same evening, finding his strength rapidly failing him, he expressed a wish to see the deacons of the church: they came, and he endeavoured to address them; but his breathing was so excessively painful, that speech nearly failed him; when he said, "I am afraid you are come too late—it is all over—God will accept of the will." They remained, however, for some time, watching their beloved pastor, when, to their satisfaction, he appeared to revive a little; and then, with an energy that surprised, and a pathos which greatly affected all present, he delivered them his last charge: "Meet often together for prayer; consult with each other how to act; strive to promote the cause of Jesus Christ, and the peace of

the church; and with respect to the choice of a minister, be earnest in prayer that the Lord would send you one after his own heart. Respecting yourselves, the world and the church will be looking up to you; let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ: and with respect to the discipline of the church, be careful that you do not hurt the weakest mind; for the church is considered as a body, and if any member be hurt, the whole body suffers." On the Saturday preceding his death, he felt an earnest desire that he might, on the next day, begin his eternal Sabbath: this, however, was denied him, but the night was a night of rapture. A little before day, he thought God was granting him his wish, when, with transport, he cried, "*Conquest! conquest! Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb.*" On the Sabbath, his sufferings were very great: yet a smile of inexpressible sweetness brightened his countenance; and on being asked how he felt, he exclaimed, "Oh the presence of the Lord! the presence of the Lord! I cannot describe it. 'Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither has it entered the heart of man to conceive it.'" On the evening of the Sabbath, his pains ceased; after which he continued triumphing in Christ, until Friday, the 16th of February, 1816, when, without a struggle or a groan, he fell asleep. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." His remains were interred on Tuesday, February 20, in the grave-yard adjoining the meeting: when addresses were delivered to an immense concourse of people attending the funeral, by the Rev. Messrs. Rees and Thomas; and on the

Sabbath following, a funeral sermon was delivered by the Rev. David Rees, from Rev. ii. 10, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The loss of him will be long felt, not only by his afflicted family, and bereaved church, but by the churches of the Western Association in Wales in general. At the first missionary meeting that was held in the principality by the Baptists, he was appointed Secretary to the western district; and being a judicious divine, and possessing popular talents, he was called to preach at almost all the annual associations of the western churches, to the many thousands usually attending on those meetings. Enoch like, he walked with God, who took him to himself, and afforded him a much greater portion of the joy of salvation in dying, than what falls to the lot of dying Christians in general.

T. L.
J. H.

MEDITATIONS ON DEATH AND THE INVISIBLE WORLD.

THE serious and enlightened mind of a good man, in the hours of retirement, loves to indulge in grave and pensive musings; and to mingle the solemn prospects and scenes of eternity, with the fleeting moments and events of time. He loves to call in his wandering thoughts, to withdraw his attachments from mortal objects, to collect all his great and elevating sentiments: with these he advances to the shades of death, and inquires, "What will be the feelings and emotions of my spirit, when it approaches, for the last time, this melancholy gloom, this

important close of my earthly life?" He feels that the present is a dark and mysterious scene, on which his spirit is confined within those narrow limits that will not permit him to go forth among unseen worlds, or to visit that vast futurity that lies before him. The significant intimations of his future greatness, which he has received from the visits of heavenly spirits, and the touches of the Deity, encourage him to pierce the darkness that hangs around him, and to send his boldest thoughts on a mission of discovery into those regions where he hopes to dwell for ever, when he is called away from this narrow sphere of being and intelligence. The solemn illuminations which have been sent down from heaven, to guide him in the way to immortal happiness and liberty, extend their light over the whole range of unlimited duration; but his spirit can advance only a few stages in the broad and shining track: it is unable to approach the limits of that heavenly circle, within which the bright and eternal visions of the Deity, and the sublime felicity of his most exalted servants, are fully disclosed. The high employments that await him in this infinite and sacred circle; the fullness of that glory, some gleams of which beam on him through the shades of death; the extended revelations of the Supreme mind, which are there unveiled to created vision, he is not able to comprehend. Sometimes, indeed, he approaches so near to the celestial gates, that he can hear the sacred music within, and the harmonious tones of angelic voices celebrating the praises of the God of heaven: but he cannot enter. Hence, he consoles himself by anticipating that

much-dreaded period when all the felicities and all the secrets of that grand world, that city of the universe, will be unfolded. He knows that the solemn and mysterious hour is coming on the wings of time,—whose sounds already announce its approach—when this material frame in which the soul resides, shall pass away like the shades of night, and the spirit darting forth like a brilliant star from behind a cloud, will shine in all its brightness. As the shades of darkness recede from its view, the lights of eternity beam upon the enraptured and liberated spirit. When freed from every earthly encumbrance and pollution, it rises above the sphere of mortality, and enters on a wide celestial scene, where invisible beings crowd around to welcome its entrance into the abodes of everlasting wonders. All the invisible is now unveiled. The disembodied spirit, feeling itself surrounded with the elements of heaven, triumphs in unlimited prospects, and fixes its contemplations on the glory of him who sitteth on the throne. It gazes, with sacred and unbounded rapture, on the eternal splendours of the Divinity, and with infinite ardour joins in those sublime devotions which can only be performed by spirits whose powers are set at full liberty. It exults in the mighty thought, that the powers of sin, the spirits of darkness, the fears of death, can approach it no more. It comprehends the greatness of the divine mercy by which it has been delivered from all its degradation and misery, and by which its faded glory is restored with additional brightness, and raised to a condition of progressive felicity and perfection. It can now mingle with superior spirits, and

take an unlimited range through those extended regions of glory and intelligence which will form the scene of its everlasting employments.

This is the interesting and strange transition from time to eternity which the spirit makes when it vanishes from this globe. Let me follow it in thought, and mark its progress through the airy space. Being freed from all the impediments and fetters of matter, the powerful attractions of the supreme centre of uncreated beauty and perfection impel it forward: it continues to rise with the rapidity of lightning towards the throne of the Deity; it feels the animating power and glow of the sacred fire of eternity; and, being filled with liberty in all its powers, the whole canopy of heaven, with all its suns and stars, can neither bound its prospects nor limit its flight. The angels of heaven attend it through all the wonderful regions of space. They converse in language too sublime for mortals to conceive. They continue to advance till they reach the heavenly gates, through which they enter into the abodes of light, where spirits dwell in sweet and eternal repose. In passing from its earthly residence to the mansions of peace, the spirit acquires some new and finer senses, by which it comprehends the magnificent visions of glory and felicity which are now presented to its view. In this region of spirits, this rendezvous of souls, will the new inhabitant feel no tender emotions respecting the human attachments which are broken by its flight? Will it be entirely employed in pure and elevated devotion? Will no fond remembrance of earthly affinities remain? Can the touch of death destroy those

exquisite sentiments of affection which now mingle with all the feelings and aspirations of the soul? Is its intercourse with the present scene for ever closed; and must it be parted entirely from the friends it leaves behind in this vale of mortality? This cannot be: every sentiment of pious friendship and attachment which was inspired below, will rise with it to heaven, and share its refinement and glory. The past scenes are still remembered with pleasure, and visited with the highest delight. The spirit watches with the tenderest regard over its sleeping dust, its reposing embers, which shall rise again into a grand and beautiful form, and live for ever. It feels the loss which it has sustained, and expects with pleasure the long approaching time when it will be re-united to its much-loved companion. It longs to enjoy full perfection, and to possess the triumph of heaven in a body of purity and celestial refinement. In this lofty region of sacred enjoyments, and in high intercourse and friendship with the angels of light, the spirit resides. Secured from all dangers, and inspired with exalted felicity, it waits in confidence and joyful expectation, till the loud sounds of the trumpet shall end its imperfect repose; it waits in exulting hope, till the great day of expected consummation, the day on which it shall enter into eternal union with its renovated body, and with all the inhabitants of heaven.

This great change of death is fast approaching to myself. Mortality is wasting away. Every moment destroys its atom. Those avenues are opening in my frame through which my spirit will soon ascend from its present abode.

Ere long, the messenger of death will be commissioned to convey me from this globe into that mysterious region, where no earthly friend can attend to soothe my sorrows, or share my happiness. And can I, in that solemn and unknown world, entrust my spirit into the care of even a company of angels? Their protection would be insufficient. Their friendship would not secure my safety or felicity. But there is a Friend, who has the keys of death and of the invisible world, whose power is infinite and whose mercy is unfailing. May this kind and all-seeing Redeemer, who presides in high authority over the empire of heaven, when I close my eyes on the scenes of mortality, receive my spirit to his arms, and encircle it with the beams of his majesty and goodness! May he console me with his presence when languishing in the cold embrace of death, and sinking into the dust of the grave! Attended by him, I can behold the curtain which hides futurity drawn aside without dismay. Under his protection I can mingle with pure spirits, and meet the developements of eternity with confidence and joy. Possessing his friendship, and confiding in his power, I can endure all that death can inflict; I can bid adieu to this orb with all its treasures and all its enjoyments; I can go to any world where he shall be pleased to fix my abode, confident that wherever his presence is, there my felicity must also be. Yet there is something fearful and alarming in the prospect of death, in the awful solemnities of separating from the body. What can chase away the images of terror? Jesus! thou great and almighty Redeemer! thou hast passed through the

gloom of death, and trod the mysterious and ærial path that leads into the temple of eternity. Thou art now the universal Ruler and the tender Shepherd of the fold of God. Into that blessed fold no enemy can ever enter to disturb the sweet repose and harmony of thy redeemed; from it no friend will ever depart to excite feelings of distress. This heavenly inclosure, secure from the influence of change and death, is under thy protection. Thou art the Guardian of thy flock, and in thy friendship and care they enjoy unceasing delight. To this blessed company may my spirit be added when it leaves this world! They are happy, for 'the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.' He replenishes them with the bread of life till the full fruition of God, the perfect day of eternity shall come. This great day comes full of glory and full of wonders. The heavens are removed—the gates of death are opened—the millions of the redeemed arise clothed with celestial beauty, and stand before their Lord, the final Judge of all! He clears them from every charge, and leads them into his kingdom, where they are encircled with his glory and raised to his throne. Here the prospects and visions are too bright for mortal eye to contemplate, or mortal imagination to conceive. Thought is overwhelmed with the mighty scene: all is ineffable and transcendent!

What pensive and gloomy emotions are these contemplations suited to excite in every serious mind, respecting the far greater part of mankind! How very few

of the long train of human spirits who are daily leaving this world to enter on their final condition of being, are prepared to go into that high and central region of happiness where all the truly great and good must reside, and into which none can enter without being purified and refined by the power of that religion which most neglect and despise! It is a cause for the deepest sorrow and compassion, that men are so indifferent to the fearful destiny which awaits them beyond the grave; that they can spend this short but vastly interesting season of their probation without obtaining those impressions of sacred goodness, and that friendship with the Almighty, which are the only assurance of being conducted into a happy eternity. What an awful spectacle does the world present to the mind that is accustomed to connect the present with the future! Why do not men feel anxious to avoid the impending ruin? Why will they oppose the powers of mercy, and spend their lives in opening the gates of the eternal prison in which they seem determined to dwell for ever? Why do they not feel the powerful attractions of infinite beauty and love? Oh! it is too evident, that sin has entered this province of the creation, and spread its poisonous and dire contagion around this unhappy globe. How gloomy would be the condition of all men, if the Son of God had not come into this element of misery and death! He has come, and effected a mighty revolution: he has opened a way for our return to holiness and to God; he offers to lead us from this scene of degradation and woe to the eternal paradise. Let us follow the kind and merciful directions of the

Prince of life, and he will conduct us to more than our original dignity and happiness. How great are the prospects of Christians! The sacred magnificence and splendours of the kingdom of glory will soon be unfolded to their enraptured view! They will soon be called to join the wide circle of angels and the spirits of the just; to dwell for ever in the presence of God. Φίλος.

WHY MANY CHRISTIANS IMPROVE SO LITTLE.

THAT it should be the aim of Christians to improve continually in those qualities that form their character and distinguish them from the world, is most evident from the sacred scriptures; it being plainly implied in many passages, and in others expressly enjoined, as a duty. The present state of Christians is compared to a race, in which the candidates always press to the goal; to a conflict, in which successive advantages are essential to final victory; to the progress of light, which from the obscurity of the morning-dawn rises to the splendour of mid-day. What is implied in these metaphors, is enjoined in such passages as the following:—*Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—Give diligence to make your calling and election sure—As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby—Let us purify ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit and perfect holiness.**

Though it be thus evident that Christians ought continually to endeavour to improve their character, it is obvious to remark,

that many of them, whose sincerity cannot reasonably be doubted, appear not to make any progress in knowledge, wisdom, devotion, or benevolence. They discover the same blemishes and imperfections, as when they first professed to be the disciples of Christ; and fall into the same improprieties of conduct. The lapse of time, the good and the evil of life, the intercourse of society, the instructions of scripture, and the practices of devotion, enlarged not their views, refined not their nature, and cure not their defects. It may, perhaps, be of use to inquire, why many Christians improve so little.

1. *When persons first begin to think upon their lives, and compare their conduct with the rule of duty, they discover, as well the vices and defects of their character, as their offences against God.* The light in which they appear, while it induces them highly to disapprove of themselves, awakens in their minds apprehensions of the Divine displeasure. It seems necessary to be renewed, no less than pardoned. To those in this state of feeling, the gospel is remarkably adapted to afford relief; as it exhibits the Divine Being disposed, both to grant pardon, on their penitential application to his mercy, through the great Sacrifice; and to bestow, on their earnest supplications, the renewing virtue of his Holy Spirit. Embracing this representation, their fears are banished; they are encouraged to hope, and they are led to give themselves to the Lord. But instead of considering this change as the point whence they start on a course of uninterrupted endeavour to improve in every Christian virtue, they allow it to reconcile themselves. Because they are changed, they are satisfied:

* 2 Pet. iii. 18. i. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 2.
2 Cor. vii. 1.

they feel as if *they had attained*. Thus easily and prematurely to become satisfied with attainments, is a general and powerful obstacle to further progress. It blinds the mind to its imperfections, supersedes efforts to correct what is amiss, or acquire what is deficient, and deprives of efficacy the means designed for improvement.

2. *He who would improve, must frequently inquire into his progress.* If his aim is virtue, or benevolence, he must examine his sentiments, dispositions, and habits. It is only by frequent and impartial scrutiny, that he can expect to see himself in his true colours, discover his defects, or ascertain its progress. This salutary branch of practice, self-examination, is neglected by many Christians. As they subject not themselves to examination, they are ignorant of their own qualities. If they saw themselves in their proper light, they would be greatly surprised; so many errors, defects, and blemishes would occur to their view. As they examine not themselves, they cannot be expected to improve; since they will be insensible to their imperfections, think highly of slight attainments, and never perceive how far they are from being conformed to the great example of Christians. They will not feel any regret, when they think of their advantages and attainments; they will never be roused, by bitter reflections on the slowness of their progress, or the opportunities that they have lost, to vigorous endeavours to acquire wisdom, or to improve in devout and virtuous sentiments.

3. *The edification of those who attend upon it, is undoubtedly a principal object of public worship.* The practices of devotion withdraw the mind from secular objects, purify it from earthly ad-

hesions, and, by calling into exercise, give strength and lustre to its better principles; while the instructions that are usually delivered, tend to elevate and enlarge the views of faith—to invigorate those sentiments that become our relation to God and our fellows, and to produce greater correctness and consistency of behaviour. That improvement is an important object of public worship, however, is forgotten by many Christians, who appear to think it is designed merely to relieve anxiety, to minister comfort, to inspire peace and hope. It is a part, indeed, of the design of religious practices, to support the mind, when pressed by the evils of the present state; to allay the fears that arise from reflections on our sinfulness and insignificance; to awaken confidence in the mercy, favour, and assistance of heaven; and, by disposing us to indulge in the prospect of immortality, to diffuse a cheering light on the path of life. But when persons suppose that the sole object of religious worship is to afford comfort, the consequences are pernicious. They frequent the worship of God, not to be enlightened or amended, but to be soothed. They are satisfied if they are encouraged, though they understand not more clearly the meaning of scripture, and are not more fitted for the duties of time, or the happiness of eternity. Those portions of instruction that are directed to their correction or improvement in righteousness, they hear with listlessness or disgust. They attend the preaching, not which is adapted to expose their defects, to make them dissatisfied with themselves, to excite them to *put off the old man, and put on the new man*, but which reconciles them to their

character and life; reprobates, as unbelief, the doubts that their blemishes create, and teaches them to expect the approbation of God, while under the condemnation of their own hearts.

4. *Another cause of the little progress of Christians in good qualities, may, perhaps, be found in the defective mode of public instruction.* The importance of Christianity, it is confessed, lies in its doctrines, in the views that it affords of God and his intentions, of the relation of man to the invisible and permanent order of existence, his present condition, and the means of securing immortality. These articles derive immense value, from their tendency to render men serious; to dissolve the charm of present objects; to generate sentiments proportionate to the human destination; to establish and perpetuate a connection between man and his Maker, and to promote a course of behaviour in harmony with the supreme law. This result, however, is not to be expected, if the articles of the Christian faith are stated crudely and jejune; if their scope and tendency are not fully explained and illustrated. It is when the truth is unfolded, in all its bearings, on the interests and destinies of men, that it is the instrument of delivering the mind, of raising it to a higher region, and endowing it with those sentiments that may prepare it for the city of God. But a crude statement of Christian doctrine, is often combined with a meagre and general exposure of human duty. It seems to be taken for granted, that if the truth is embraced, a good life will follow. If we may judge from scripture, a great part of Christian instruction ought to consist in a minute explanation of human duty; in a full

and particular illustration of the Christian character; in an exposure of the evils that prevail in certain ages, connexions, and courses of life. Men must be shown what they are, and what they ought to be. The standard should be held up; the obligations to eminence in Christian virtue should be explained and enforced: but morality is taught generally. The perpetual endeavour is to form the elements, to lay the foundation of the Christian structure: no detail is afforded of what men ought to be. Such teaching checks, rather than promotes, improvement; lulls into indifference, instead of keeping the mind awake to its imperfections, of rousing it to diligence, or inspiring it with fervent desires of perfection.

Dunstable.

W. A.

LETTER OF THE REV. J. DYER TO HIS DAUGHTERS.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

By inserting the following letter, written many years ago by the Rev. James Dyer, late of Devizes, to two of his daughters, with the design of improving the death of their sister, you will greatly oblige, yours, very sincerely,

S. S.

“MY DEAR CHILDREN,

“I own it with gratitude to God, and freely confess it to you, that no small portion of my happiness arises from the place I hold in your affections. I trust that my concern for you, and my love to you, were never so ardent as at the present moment. One affecting, and, at the same time, God-glorifying evidence, that the late awful event in our family has been, and is, in some little measure, sanctified to your father, is, that it has greatly endeared the surviving branches to his soul.

Never, never did I see the importance of true religion so clearly in any providence as in the dying gasps of my dear Sarah: never was I so deeply convinced of neglect in exhorting my dear children to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I know there are no limits to the perfections of Jehovah, but I do think, had your sister died without hope, your father had died with grief. No length of time will, I trust, erase the awfully pleasing scene from my mind. No distance of place can remove you, my children, from my thoughts, as I feel, since I have been at Bristol,* an unconquerable desire to speak to your eyes by correspondence, that I might, peradventure, speak to your hearts in a way of instruction and comfort.

"Rebekah, thou art my first-born, thou hast professed to be a Christian; I trust thou art in reality such an one: if so, thine honour, safety, pleasures, prospects, expectations, who can estimate! I beseech thee, well examine the grounds of thy hope. I pray that no delusion may blind thine eyes; that no hidden sin may lurk in thy heart; that thou mayest not fall into any error as to the nature of faith, or the operations of the passions, and that thou mayest not judge of thy state by the opinion which Christians form of thee, or the gifts which thou possessest. The Lord make thee humble, thankful, obedient, and industrious. I could wish thee to enjoy more in secret, and then if thou didst not take so many journies for public ordinances, thy benefiting would appear to all. Don't mistake me, it is not my intention to

blame thee for endeavouring to enjoy public means, but I *have* seen and *do* see many professors very diligent in hearing, who, I fear, are too great strangers to closet devotion. Good Mr. Kingdon says, 'If a person seeks secrecy for the purpose of fervency, it argues that person to be a spiritual worshipper.' Do thou my child, and may thy father, who well knows that exalted man, enter into the spirit of the sentiment, and go and do likewise. I write thus, because I love thee, and wish thee happy in life and triumphant in death.

"Lucinda, dost thou think that thy share in my affections is less than any other of my children? God forbid! No, there is hardly a day but I think on thee, and the place where thou art, and the grace that God has imparted to thine ancestors that have inhabited the dwelling thou art in, the room where I hope thou bowest thy knee morning and evening, and the bed thou retest on by night. God forbid that when thy parents are taken hence to heaven, thou, my lovely child, shouldst be banished to hell. *Sin* only can ruin thee, *grace* only can save thee. Look into thy Bible, look up to God, pray for his Spirit, for his Son, and for his salvation: his Spirit to enlighten thee, his Son to espouse thee, his salvation to adorn thee. Great are the encouragements in the word of God to young people: the Lord forbid that I should stand by thy death-bed, and see thee die in stupidity or despair. My dear child, may that God who created thee embrace thee as thy covenant God and Father! Take heed of sin, of anger, lying, pride, and idleness. I shall be glad to have a letter from each of you on

* Mr. Dyer was supplying at Bristol Tabernacle.

my return,* to hear of your welfare, and whether you thank me for my faithfulness. Give my duty to your grandmother, love and esteem to Mr. Steadman, and kind remembrances to all friends. My time expires here on next Sabbath evening. I hope to be at home by the Wednesday following; my absence from my flock and family seems long; the treatment of Tabernacle friends is very kind, and the dealings of the Lord with me are very merciful. I could say much more, but time forbids, therefore accept my best wishes, and may the Lord enable us to pray for each other. Farewell, from

Your affectionate father,
JAMES DYER."

"Bristol, Dec. 19. 1794."

THE MUTUAL DUTIES OF RULERS AND SUBJECTS.

To the Editors of the Baptist Magazine.

THE high rank held by Dr. Doddridge among theological writers, will give weight to his political sentiments. And as these are precisely those which the body of Protestant Dissenters have always expressed, and which in circumstances of national difficulty have always regulated their conduct, it is presumed, that to give them more general publicity at this eventful period, when the most entire confidence should be expressed in each other, both by those who are governed, and those who govern, will not be unsuitable. The extract is made from the *Family Expositor*; and I most devoutly unite in the judicious remarks in

the "Improvement" of the Doctor upon this *section* of his truly admirable work.

"While *subjects* learn reverence and obedience to their magistrates, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*, may *magistrates* learn a correspondent care to answer that end of their office, which the apostle makes the foundation of such precepts as these, and to be indeed *the ministers of God for good, a terror not to good but to evil works*."

"GREAT BRITAIN, while I write this, (1749,) is happy in a government to which this character may be justly applied. While we are thus happy, we shall be doubly inexcusable, if we fail in rendering just *honour*, and *tribute*, when they are so justly due."

A CONSTITUTIONAL LOYALIST.

Paraphrase, and Notes, upon *Romans*, xiii. 1—7.

"Among the many exhortations I am now giving you, my Christian brethren, to a life worthy of the gospel, that of obedience to magistrates must be acknowledged of distinguished importance. I know the Jews are strongly prejudiced against the thoughts of submitting to heathen governors; but let me strictly charge and enjoin it upon *every soul* among you, without exception, how holy soever his profession be, and however honourable his station in the church, that he *be in* all regular and orderly *subjection to the superior civil authorities* which divine Providence hath established in the places where you live. *For there is no such legal authority* but may, in one sense or another, be said to be *from God*. It is his will, that there should be magistrates to guard the peace of societies; and the hand of his

* Mr. Dyer's daughters were on a visit at Broughton when this letter was written.

providence, in directing to the persons of particular governors, ought to be seriously considered and revered. The *authorities that exist* under one form or another, are in their different places ranged, *disposed*, and established by God,* the original and universal governor. *He, therefore, who*, by an unjust resistance, endeavours to confound these ranks, and *sets himself*, as it were, in array *against the authority* of which magistrates are possessed,† *withstands the disposition of God* for the public peace and order: and *they who withstand* so wise and beneficial an appointment, *shall receive to themselves condemnation*, not only from the civil powers they injure, but from the supreme Sovereign, whose laws they break, and whose order they endeavour to reverse.

“And indeed the good purposes to which magistracy is subservient, make it very apparent, that God must be displeased when that is despised; *for rulers*, in their several offices, are not, on the whole, *a terror to good*

works, but to such as are evil,* being intended to encourage the former, by punishing the latter. *Wouldst thou not, therefore, be afraid of the high authority* with which they are invested? *Do that which is good, and thou shalt*, according to the general course of administration, have not only *praise* but *respect from it*.†

* “*Are not a terror to good works, &c.*] If circumstances arise in which this argument is not applicable, it is reasonably to be taken for granted, that the *apostle* did not intend here to pronounce concerning such cases. Nothing can be said for interpreting these passages in favour of *unlimited passive obedience*, which will not prove any resistance of a private injury unlawful, by the authority of our *Lord's* decision, Matt. v. 39, 40. And this would subvert the great foundation of *magistracy* itself, which is appointed, by force, to ward off and prevent it, or avenge such injuries. But it was very prudent in the *apostle* not to enter into any *question* relating to the right of *resistance* in some extraordinary cases; as those cases are comparatively few, and as the just decisions which he could have given on that subject might, possibly, have been misrepresented, to his own detriment, and that of the *gospel*. The general laws of benevolence to the whole, so strongly asserted in this contract, are in particular cases to determine; and all particular precepts, in whatever universal terms they are delivered, are always to give way to them.”

† “*In the general course of administration, &c.*] As it is certain the case is often otherwise, and was with respect to Nero, under whom this *epistle* was written, it is necessary to interpret the words with this latitude. And there is just reason to conclude, *that magistrates, in general, are in fact much more beneficial than hurtful to society*, which is a good argument for a general submission; and that was, as we observed above, all the *apostle* could intend to enforce.”

* “*Disposed* and established.] So I render the word *τεταγμεναι*, thinking the English word *ordained* rather too strong. Divine Providence *ranges*, and, in fact, *establishes*, the various governments of the world: they are, therefore, under the character of governments, in the general to be revered. But this cannot make what is wrong and pernicious in any particular forms, sacred, divine, and immutable, any more than the hand of God in a *famine* or *pestilence*, is an argument against seeking proper means to remove it.”

† “*The natural and candid interpretation* proposed above, frees us from the endless embarrassment of a king *de jure* [in right] and *de facto*, [in fact]. I should think it unlawful to resist the most unjust power that can be imagined, if there was a probability only of doing mischief by it.”

This, I say, may reasonably be expected, and will be the case, when the magistrate understands himself and his office: *for he is*, according to the original appointment, to be considered as elevated above his fellow-men, not for his own indulgence, improvement, and advantage, but that he might be to thee, and to all the rest of his subjects, as the *servant* and instrument of *God* for thine and the public good. *But if thou dost* that which is *evil*, and so makest thyself the enemy of that society of which he is the guardian, thou hast indeed reason to be afraid, *for he holdeth not the sword of justice*, which God hath put into his hand, in vain.* It was given him *for* this very purpose, that he might smite malefactors, and thereby preserve peace and order in his dominions. And in doing it, *he is* to be regarded, not as acting a severe and oppressive part, but as the *servant* and substitute of *God*; an avenger appointed in his name, to execute not his own personal resentment, but the *wrath* of a righteous Providence, against *him that doth evil*, in instances wherein it would be highly improper to leave that avenging power in the hands of private injured persons. *Therefore*, when this is considered, piety, as well as prudence and human virtue, will teach them that *it is necessary to be in a regular subjection, not only out of regard to the dread thou mayest reasonably have of that wrath and punishment which man can execute, but also for the sake of conscience, which will be violated, and armed with re-*

proaches against you, if you disturb the public peace, resist the kind purposes of God, by opposing governors while they act under his commission. This is, in effect, what all subjects profess to own. *As on this account you also pay tribute*; which magistrates every where receive, and is levied *for* this apparent reason, that *they are* to be considered as the *ministers* of the good providence of *God*, who give to the public the whole of their care, time, and labour, and *continually applying themselves to this one affair*, the execution of their high office, have a right to be honourably maintained out of the public revenues, on the most obvious principles of equity and justice.

“On this principle, therefore, be careful that you *render to all* what is justly *their due*; even though you may have opportunities of defrauding them of it, to your own immediate and temporal advantage. *To whom tribute is due*, for your persons or estates, render such *tribute*, or taxes; and *to whom custom is due* for any commodity exported, or imported, render that custom; and seek not clandestinely to convey such commodities away without paying it. *To whom reverence is due* on account of their worth or character, render *reverence*; and *to whom* any external form of civil *honour* and respect is due, by virtue of their office and rank of life, though it should so happen that they have no peculiar merit to recommend them to your regard, scruple not to pay them all proper marks of *honour*; and guard against that stiffness, which, under pretence of Christian simplicity, by disputing such common forms, may rather indulge pride, and occasion reproach.”

* “Holdeth not the sword in vain.] This strongly intimates the lawfulness of inflicting *capital punishment*, which to deny, is subverting the chief use of *magistracy*.”

Juvenile Department.

HISTORICAL ESSAYS.

No. IV.

On the Corruption of Christianity in Britain, prior to the Invasion of William the Conqueror.

THE adorable Redeemer, who best understood the nature of Christianity, said, "My kingdom is not of this world;" and his whole life was a beautiful exemplification of that comprehensive declaration. His immediate disciples, inspired by the same spirit, displayed its meaning in the sanctity, simplicity, and disinterestedness of their conduct; and their example delightfully diffused itself in numberless instances around them. But men, uninfluenced by the sublime and heaven-born principles they taught, yet putting on the garb of religion, gradually departed from its purity; and, as their interests or pleasures prompted them, took step after step in the vain endeavour of uniting such heterogeneous things as the church and the world. The consequence has been as an intelligent and spiritual mind would expect, that nothing of Christianity has remained with such characters but the name; and the fruitful expedients and speculations of error, have grown into systems of corruption, delusion, and superstition, the most flagrant, dangerous, and ostentatious.

Of this description, nothing is so prominent in our history as popery, the greatest delusion, perhaps, that ever disgraced the world; and, at a period when its awful policy and strenuous exertions are reviving,* it is particularly desirable, that the attention of our young friends should

be directed to its nature, and this can hardly be more effectually done than by a reference to facts: our limits will not now allow us to proceed further than the Norman invasion, but we hope to resume the subject.

Augustin, whose mission was noticed in our last paper, met with a favourable reception; and he entered upon the duties of his journey with all the zeal for which the missionaries of that faith are generally distinguished. He avoided all appearances of compulsion on the consciences of his converts, declaring, by way of policy, a very important truth, that the service of Christ must be entirely voluntary. He allured attention by his rigid manners, and the severe penances he inflicted on himself; and thus prepared the way for the belief of those *miracles* he daringly pretended to effect for their conversion. Gregory, who had now reached the pontificate, seconded his representative's ardour; and, more in the style of papal proceedings, wrote to Ethelbert, the king of Kent, informing him the end of the world was at hand, and exhorting him to exert himself for the conversion of his subjects, and *rigorously* to discountenance the worship of idols; and, by every expedient of kindness, *terror*, or *correction*, to promote the work of holiness.

Eadbald, who, at the death of his father Ethelbert, in 616, succeeded to the throne, being determined on a marriage very properly disallowed by the church of Rome, returned with his people to idolatry; and so discouraged were the bishops of London and Rochester, that they left the country hopeless. Laurentius, the successor of Augustin, before he followed their example, determined on one experiment for reclaiming the king. He appeared before that prince, and exposed his lacerated body. Eadbald surprised, inquired who could have treated

* The Inquisition was recently renewed in Spain. The order of the Jesuits has been re-established in Rome, and the Pope has issued several bulls against the benevolent and invaluable exertions of Bible Societies.

him with such indignity and cruelty? Laurentius assured him he had been thus chastised by St. Peter, who, in a vision, had severely reprovèd him for his intention of deserting his charge. This ingenious, but base expedient, had the desired effect; Eadbald divorced his mother-in-law, and both king and people recommenced their profession of such misnamed Christianity.

Popery soon gained the ascendancy in all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy; intermarriages in the royal families favoured the exertion of female influence, to which, at this time, the Romish church was greatly indebted. It would be easy, from each of these kingdoms, to illustrate the anti-Christian nature of this profession. The kingdom of Mercia affords a striking instance, in the conduct of the infamous Offa, who began his reign A. D. 755. Though the murderer of his daughter's friend, he found it easy to obtain the countenance of the pretended head of the church. He paid great attention to the clergy, gave a tenth of his goods to the church, and enriched the cathedral of Hereford; and thus secured to himself a favourable reception, and supreme absolution of his crimes, on his arrival at Rome, whither he went on pilgrimage. As worldly riches and power were the grand objects of the Popes' ambition, worldly policy was their guide, and religion, the garb under which their multiplied proceedings were concealed, was always fashioned as their present interests required. Arrogating to themselves temporal, as well as spiritual power, kings were necessarily their inferiors, and found it advantageous to obtain their good will. Offa offered a yearly donation for the support of an English college at Rome; and, to raise it, imposed a contribution of 1*d.* on each house possessed of 30*d.* a year. Thus was laid the foundation of the tax afterwards levied on the country at large, and known by the name of Peter's pence: for the Roman Pontiff, who knew how to convert a gift into a demand, subsequently claimed it as his due. Offa completed his career of hypocrisy, by representing himself as

guided by a vision from heaven, in the discovery of the relics of St. Alban the martyr, at Verulam, (now St. Alban's) where he founded a monastery.

In the kingdom of Essex, we find a king of the same name, who made the same pious journey; and lost to the interests of his subjects, and the good of mankind, ingloriously terminated his life in a cloister: and also Sigeric, another royal pilgrim, who ended his useless days in the journey.

In the annals of Wessex, we meet with Ceodwalla, who died in 689; and his successor Ina, both of whom travelled to Rome for the same delusive purpose. The latter, on his return, shut himself up in a cloister.

Nor did this rage for pilgrimage expire with the Heptarchy; the great Alfred's father, Ethelwolf, the second on the throne after the kingdoms were united, notwithstanding the perilous state of his country in consequence of the hostile visits of the Danes, could not place the protection of his subjects, and the tranquillity of his kingdom, in competition with the superlative merit of the devotional excursion, which he made about A. D. 853; nor had his *Holiness*, whose advice and reproof should certainly have extended as far as his authority, integrity enough to counsel his return. He trifled away a whole year in imaginary piety, and settled 300 mancuses* a year on the great see: 100 to light the lamps of St. Peter, 100 those of St. Paul, and 100 to the Pope himself. Had any fears concerning the safety of his kingdom crept into his mind in this year of absence, they were probably overcome by his faith in the importance of those ceremonies he had left it to perform; and those voluntary privations he had retired to undergo. He might naturally have supposed, that the blessing of heaven would be secured by him, who feigned to be God's representative, and whose favour he was so laboriously seeking. But, on his return, his son Ethelbald had assumed the government; and he was re-

* A mancus was about the weight of half a crown.

duced to the necessity of giving him the best part of his kingdom. The ardour of his zeal, however, continued, and we see him, before his death, sanctioning the new claims of the clergy, who had discovered, that, because God had appointed a tenth to be granted to the Jewish priesthood, they must have a right to the same.

No system, perhaps, could be devised, that should give to an aspiring priest such influence; nor could a king, in those days, have a more troublesome enemy. The contemptible Dunstan, though canonized by his party, affords a remarkable proof of this fact. The successive sovereigns, Edred, Edwy, Edgar, and Edward, felt his power. This man was originally a licentious character, but finding that vice obnoxious to his ambition, he rushed to the opposite extreme, secluding himself in a cell, in which he could neither stand erect, nor recline at length. Here he represented that he was violently tempted by Satan, whom he severely punished in one of his visits. By such stratagems, he recovered his character. Finding austerity of manners increase his popularity, he zealously contended for what was now talked of, the celibacy of the clergy; particularly, as the gross doctrine of transubstantiation was about this time introduced.

Edwy, the succeeding king, was so unfortunate as to displease the ecclesiastics in his marriage. The behaviour of Dunstan was insufferably insolent, and the young prince found a pretence for his banishment. But this intolerant priest left his influence behind; and so active were his votaries, that Odo, archbishop of Canterbury, actually seized the queen by a military band, and, as she was remarkably beautiful, burned her face with a red-hot iron, and sent her from her husband. The king consented to a divorce; but Elgiva having succeeded, in obliterating all marks of the wound, returned to England, and was hastening to her husband, when she was arrested by direction of Odo and the monks, and hamstrunged; and, after a few days of extreme torture, died at Gloucester. So sunk in supersti-

tion was the nation, that it sanctioned by rebellion, as a just judgment for Edwy's contempt of priestly power, what it ought to have abhorred. Dunstan lost no time in returning to persecute the king, who was excommunicated, and soon died, about A. D. 955.

Edgar determined to avoid the impolicy of the last reign, and seeing that attention to the priests would rather increase than diminish his opportunities of self-gratification, seconded their plans, and particularly caressed Dunstan, who, by his perseverance, had become primate. The king, to forward the favourite project of the haughty prelate—clerical celibacy, at a public meeting of ecclesiastics, inveighed against the dissolute lives of the clergy, and urged Dunstan to avail himself of the *civil power* in enforcing obedience.

So profane were the priests, and Dunstan himself, that they scrupled at nothing to gain their ends. In the reign of Edward, who ascended the throne about A. D. 975, and from his tragical death received the appellation of the Martyr, at several ecclesiastical meetings, where subjects were decided against Dunstan, he, on one occasion, informed the company, he had just received a revelation from heaven; on another, a voice was stated to proceed from a crucifix, stating God's opinion; and, on a third, it was contrived that the floor should sink on a sudden, except the part on which Dunstan sat. By such wicked artifices, blasphemously called miracles, he was enabled to mould their deliberations to his fancy.

The energetic Canute, who seized the government in 1017, was busily employed in the work of superstition, building churches, and endowing monasteries; and, probably, stung with remorse at the recollection of the many who had fallen in battle against him, appointed prayers to be made for their departed souls. He made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he tarried a considerable time, and succeeded in getting the devotees from Britain excused from the impositions and tolls extorted from them by the princes, through whose territories they passed, in their way to Rome.

Edward, the third from Canute, who terminated his reign in 1066, was so exemplary a papist, that he obtained the appellation of Confessor; and such was the popular opinion of his sanctity, that he was the first who touched for the king's evil—a practice happily discontinued on the accession of the present royal family.

The popes had now, by a steady and persevering policy, become the most powerful of potentates. They assumed the right of arbitrating in royal discussions, and of determining in cases of disputed succession; and the aggrandizement of the holy see was a sufficient criterion for the supposed infallible judgment. On this principle, William the Conqueror obtained the papal sanction to his bold expedition, and was honoured with a consecrated banner, and a ring, said to contain one of the hairs of St. Peter.

How thankful should we be, as Britons, for emancipation from the shackles of such awful and degrading superstition, and how zealous in every scriptural method of preventing its return: while, actuated by a Christian philanthropy, how importunate should we be with God, and how laborious among men, that pure and undefiled religion may prevail.

H. S. A.

The following is published as a Tract, and sold at 1s. 6d. per hundred: We are of opinion, that it is well adapted for our juvenile readers, and shall be happy if they, and their parents and tutors, will do all in their power to promote its circulation, as a good introduction to Delaune's Nonconformity, and Towgood's Letters on Dissent.

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS' MANUAL.

Principles of Dissent.

1. The right of private judgment and liberty of conscience, in opposition to all human authority in matters of religion.

2. The supremacy of Christ as the only Head of his church.

3. The sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice.

N. B. In all civil affairs, which are not inconsistent with the law of God, we are bound to be subject to the civil magistrate, "As the minister of God for conscience-sake," but all others ought to be disobeyed. Rom. xiii. 1, 5. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.

"Let Cæsar's dues be ever paid,
To Cæsar and his throne;

But consciences and souls were made
To be the Lord's alone." WATTS.

Principal things in the Church of England on which the Dissent from it is founded.

1. Its general frame and constitution as national and established.

2. The character and authority of certain officers appointed in it.

3. The imposition of a stated form of prayer, called the Liturgy, and many exceptionable things contained therein.

4. The pretended right of enjoining unscriptural ceremonies.

5. Terms on which ministers are admitted into their office.

6. The want of liberty in the people to choose their own ministers.

7. The corrupt state of its discipline.

Constitution of a Church of Christ.

Dissenters are of opinion, that it is a congregation, or voluntary society of Christians, who commonly meet together to attend gospel ordinances in the same place. Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Philemon, 2. Hence they think every such society has a right to transact its own affairs according to the judgment and conscience of every member thereof, independently of any other society whatsoever, or without being accountable to any but Jesus Christ, or restrained by any laws but his.

The Church of England differs from this, in that it is not a voluntary society, the whole nation being considered as members of it, whether professedly so or not, and all persons are obliged by law (except those included in the Toleration Act), at least thrice in a year, to communi-

cate with it in the Lord's-supper. It is also incapable (as it is national) of being assembled in one place, that the members of it may give their vote in ecclesiastical affairs: and the several congregations of which it consists are equally destitute of this liberty, being all obliged to an absolute uniformity in faith, worship, and discipline. It is framed by human authority; its laws are founded on Acts of Parliament, and enforced by civil sanctions; and the chief magistrate, as such, is its supreme head.

Officers of a Church of Christ.

Dissenters think, that there are two only, viz. bishops and deacons, Phil. i. 1. The bishops mentioned in the New Testament were pastors of particular congregations, and are often called elders and presbyters. The deacons spoken of in the scriptures are not ministers of the gospel, but temporal officers, appointed to take care of the poor, Acts, iv.

The officers of the Church of England are two archbishops, and twenty-four bishops, besides deans, prebendaries, canons, minor-cauons, chancellors, vicars-general, commissaries, officials, surrogates, proctors, &c. These officers not being appointed by Christ, nor in any way sanctioned by the New Testament, are the effects of an unnatural alliance of the church with the state, and chiefly of popish original.

Ordination of Ministers.

Dissenters are of opinion, that every man who is qualified for the ministerial office, by ability and piety, has a right to exercise it in any society that calls him to it; and that ordination is by no means necessary to the useful discharge of it. But they think it right, when they are about to settle with any people as pastors, to have the approbation, the prayers, and advice of some of their brethren, who pretend to no authority to constitute them pastors; that being derived solely from Christ, and the choice of the people.

They, therefore, object to the dominion assumed by the bishops over the other ministers—to the pomp and parade observed in clerical ordination—to the pretence of con-

ferring the Spirit by the imposition of hands, saying, "Receive the Holy Ghost."

Of Public Prayer.

Dissenters are of opinion that prayer should be free, or extempore, and therefore their ministers use no Liturgy, or prescribed form; but pray according to their own judgment and ability, without a book: on many accounts they object to the Common Prayer, because—1. They think it tends to promote indolence in ministers, so far as it prevents the exercise of their faculties. 2. The constant repetition of the same things tends to deaden the affections of the worshippers, and promotes formality. 3. Liturgies cannot be adapted to all the circumstances of different societies, and the several events which may occur, and which ought to be noticed in public prayer.

Rites of the Church of England.

Dissenters disapprove of all ceremonies in divine worship which are of human invention, because they consider that nothing is binding upon them to believe, or to observe, but what is enjoined or practised in the Holy Scriptures. They deny the authority which the Church of England assumes in her 20th Article, "to decree rites and ceremonies in divine worship," and consider themselves, therefore, bound to refuse compliance with them; because this would be *will-worship*, which is expressly forbidden, Col. ii. 20, 26. Of this description are, 1. Worshipping towards the east. 2. Bowing at the name of Jesus. 3. Signing with a cross in baptism. 4. Particular gestures in worship, especially kneeling at the Lord's-supper. They object, also, to the wearing of particular garments by the clergy—observing certain days as holy—the distinction of places said to be consecrated, &c.

In the office of Baptism, such expressions are used concerning the efficacy of that rite, as naturally lead persons to conceive that it is a saving ordinance, that the child is *re-generated*—and, therefore, made by baptism "a member of Christ, a

child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." A sentiment unreasonable and unscriptural; dangerous and destructive, it is feared, to the souls of thousands.

The *Burial Service* is very objectionable, because being used for all without distinction of character; it is manifestly absurd and wicked, to express on account of persons who died in hardened vice and infidelity, thankfulness to God that they are taken out of the miseries of this wicked world; and to express "a sure and certain hope of their resurrection to eternal life."

Other objections are felt to some of the services on holy-days—to the use of Apocryphal books—to sentences in the Athanasian Creed, and in some parts of the Litany.

Choice of Ministers.

Dissenters think no person whatever is empowered to impose a minister upon others, but that every congregation has a right to choose its own: they think it as reasonable that all persons should choose their own ministers, as their own lawyers and physicians. But in the Church of England the minister is imposed by some patron, who frequently presents those who are shamefully disqualified for the office, and who are often disagreeable to the people.

Discipline.

Dissenters object to the disci-

pline of the Established Church, because it is shamefully defective and corrupt, particularly in the admission of persons to the Lord's-table; none whatever are refused who have been confirmed by the bishop, nor are any excommunicated, though they be guilty of gross immoralities; many, also, are permitted to receive the Lord's-supper, merely as a qualification for a civil office.

Conclusion.

If the principles of dissent from the national church be of any importance, surely those dissenters act a very inconsistent part who are indifferent to them; many of whom seem to forget, that their forefathers, whom they profess to venerate, left the national church, not on account of *doctrines*, but those impositions on conscience which strike at the headship of Jesus Christ, and which this church still continues to practise; and doubtless it is incumbent on those who are convinced of the truth of those principles, on which their own dissent is founded, to take care that their children be well instructed in the knowledge of them. The juvenile reader is referred for further information on this subject to the Protestant Dissenters' Catechism, by the late Rev. Samuel Palmer, of Hackney; sold by Button and Son, Paternoster-row, price 1s.

Obituary.

SUSANNA COULSTON.

SUSANNA COULSTON was born January 7, 1764. Though she was brought up in a very decent manner, her education in the truth and reality of religion was altogether neglected: she therefore quickly yielded to the solicitations of gay and trifling companions. But while she regarded the present world as the only source of her happiness, she was mercifully preserved from

running into many excesses. In her twelfth year she lost her mother by death, a circumstance that deeply affected her. Soon afterwards, her father having formed a new connection, she experienced some trials; which, though very painful, were, at a subsequent period of her life, regarded as preparatory to an affectionate reception of the gospel. When she was 15 years of age, she was prevailed on by a young woman to hear a Mr. Langley, who preached

at Rook-lane, Frome; and though it does not appear that she was then brought to an acquaintance with the truth, yet she was induced ever after to attend the means of grace. At length her whole attention was arrested; it pleased God to convince her of her sinfulness: she deserted her sinful companions—felt a hatred to every thing she thought sinful, and desired to be freed from every snare. Her father's situation in life obliged her frequently to remain at home; "but the more" (as she observes in her private papers) "I was prevented from attending the public means of grace, the more earnest I was to enjoy them. Often have I taken some religious book, and retired to the garden, where I thought no one could see me, and have poured out my soul to God in earnest desire, enjoying with him the most delightful intercourse. I knew not at this time from whence those desires proceeded; but the divine Spirit was graciously pleased afterwards to show me, that he was working in my heart." This spiritual inclination of her mind was nurtured and improved by a sermon that she heard from Mr. Langley on the "Prodigal," on which the following observations were found in her papers: "I saw myself in the very situation of the prodigal, at a great distance from God, without whose grace I must eternally perish; but as Mr. Langley spoke of the willingness of the Father to receive and embrace the penitent wanderer, I was enabled to believe that God was as willing to receive every sinner that comes to him. I was certain that I was earnestly seeking the Lord, and desired his favour more than life, and could truly say, 'My soul followeth hard after God.' At that time I delighted in nothing so much as private prayer: when first I saw it my duty to attend to that exercise more stately, I was much agitated with the sense of my own unfitness for it, and my ignorance; but rather than neglect it, I chose a form of prayer, but afterwards, being more convinced of my wants, I was enabled to do without that help, and to pray, I hope, with the spirit and the understanding." In this

stage of her experience, she seems to have been destitute of any friend to whom she could disclose her religious feelings, but she had learned the truth of that maxim—"The Christian is never less alone than when alone;" and though, according to her own account, she had been greatly refreshed and strengthened in hearing and reading the word of God, and attending on the public means, which she observed with as much punctuality as the nature of her situation would allow, yet her greatest delight was in private devotion.

After some time, she became a member of the chapel then in Lady Huntingdon's connection; by this union she felt herself, according to her own expression, more highly honoured than she would have done had she possessed all the honours and distinctions of the world.

All this time, however, she appears to have formed but very indistinct views of the way of salvation. She was endeavouring to derive comfort from herself, and she attended religious duties too much with the view of recommending herself to the favour of God, than as the means of glorifying and enjoying him. This discovery threw her mind into the most painful agitation, and she nearly resolved, notwithstanding the pleasure she had felt in the public ordinances of religion, to forsake the throne of grace, and abandon herself to despair. In addition to these exercises, she was much troubled about the doctrine of election: she thought it almost impossible that she should ever have been chosen to eternal life; but she soon found, from the word of God, that *that doctrine* was no sort of impediment to the salvation of any poor sinner, whose heart is inclined to come to Christ. Of this she was convinced from John, vi. 37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." She then began to examine herself by the forty-fourth verse, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," that she might know whether she had

experienced any drawings of the Holy Spirit—whether she possessed the evidences of those drawings, viz. holy desire, love, prayer, and a willing obedience to the commands of Christ: this solicitude increasing, God was pleased to manifest himself to her soul in such a way, that her doubts were quickly dissipated, and her views of salvation rendered clear and supporting. “By the eye of faith,” she writes, “I contemplated the cross, and the glorious victim that bled thereon; I was constrained to cry out—‘O Lord, how sinful a creature am I!’ I was then immediately enabled to look to the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ, and found that it spoke peace to my soul: I then saw myself destitute of all righteousness, and cast myself wholly on Christ; in this act I felt a joy and satisfaction that I cannot describe.”

After this, she began to think of devoting herself to Christ by baptism: “I was willing,” she says, “to do what I thought was the will of God. I wished not only to have a name to live, but to live indeed; to live by the faith of the Son of God, and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ. Having perceived that it was my duty to submit to the ordinance of baptism, I signified my desire to some friends of the Baptist denomination, and the church in Badcox-lane readily received me, a poor unworthy sinner, into fellowship. I have great reason to bless God for that spiritual help and consolation I have received from the ministry of good Mr. Kingdon, and that I have frequently left public worship rejoicing in my Lord and Saviour. I bless the name of the Lord not only for the comfort I have enjoyed, but for the troubles I have endured; because those trials have taught me many useful lessons, humbled my soul, and helped me to depend on Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He has been pleased to provide for me a comfortable situation, by which I am able to tread the path of life with much less difficulty than many of my fellow-creatures, and am much less encum-

bered with the cares of this mortal state than I could have expected. I have now the enjoyment of health, friends, food, and raiment. O my soul, bless the Lord! that though thou hast many times been cast down and disquieted, yet thou art enabled to rejoice in thy Redeemer, and to live on the grace and faithfulness of a God that cannot lie: and though thou art frequently molested and disturbed by the adversary of souls, by a tempting and an alluring world, and by the depravity that still remains in thee, yet thou shalt not be finally overcome! The victory is sure—thou must still fight—thy warfare is not yet ended—thou hast probably a thousand more conflicts to pass through; but fear not, for greater is he that is for thee than all those that are against thee! Jesus is gone up on high; he has led captivity captive. O may I ever, a poor unworthy sinner, be permitted to live on the fulness of an all-sufficient Saviour, who ever liveth to intercede for the vilest that come unto God by him: may I ever be enabled to honour his dear name below, that I may dwell with him in that world of bliss, where I shall sin no more, and where God shall wipe all tears from my eyes.

‘There shall I see his face,
And never, never sin;
There from the rivers of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in.’”

This excellent woman was at length brought to that period in which a lingering consumption admonished her, that the Lord was at hand. Her long converse with heaven had, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, raised her above those tormenting fears which intimidate the heart, and darken the prospects of the sinner. Resting on the atonement of Jesus, and the promises of an unchanging God, she looked across the gulf of death with placid firmness, and waited on its brink with patience, till her heavenly Father should call her home. Her hope, as she drew near the grave, was not accompanied with that expansion and elevation of the spirits with which some dying believers have been favoured, but she

was serious, calm, and spiritual till she fell asleep in Jesus, leaving behind her a name embalmed with the richest odours of piety.

I cannot prevail on myself to finish this account, without transcribing part of a devotional exercise, which shows the interest which this amiable saint felt in the happiness of her minister, and of the church of which she was so great an ornament.

"O thou compassionate and loving Jesus, who art ever mindful of thy church, and graciously inclined to supply the wants of thy needy children; thou hearest when the young ravens cry, and feedest them; how much more, then, wilt thou supply those whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood! I adore thee, blessed God, that thou hast heard and answered the prayers of thy church: when thou wast pleased to take away, by death, thy dear aged servant, thou didst send us another dear pastor - - - - -

- - - - - May the Lord make him a long and lasting blessing to thy church; pour down the choicest of thy blessings on him and his family; may he at all times feel thee near and precious to his soul; may he daily receive fresh supplies of grace, that he may stand up with all boldness, and declare the whole counsel of God, with liberty of heart and tongue; may he feed on the precious truths he delivers to others, so that we may all rejoice together, and increase with all the increase of God." S. S.

MR. WILLIAM CUBITT.

MR. WILLIAM CUBITT was born May 21, 1759, at Neatishead, in the county of Norfolk. He was brought up a strict churchman, but having a brother-in-law a dissenter, a deacon of a Baptist church, he frequently went with him the distance of seven miles to worship among dissenters. By this means the Lord was pleased to shine into his soul, and to discover to him his state as a breaker of that law which is "holy,

just, and good." Thus taught of God, he could say—

"Till now I saw no danger nigh,
I liv'd at ease, nor fear'd to die:
Wrapt up in self-conceit and pride,
I shall have peace at last, I cried.

But when, great God, thy light divine,
Had shone on this dark soul of mine,
Then I beheld, with trembling awe,
The terrors of thy holy law."

Through mercy it was not long before he saw, that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and in him he trusted for salvation the remnant of his days. In the year 1792 he was baptized, and joined the Baptist church at Ingham, Norfolk. Living in a dark village, he soon felt a warm desire to be useful to his neighbours, and was very earnest in prayer to God for their salvation. With a view to their good, and God's glory, he opened his school-room on Saturday evenings, and read to them Mr. Burder's Village Sermons, &c.; frequently dropping very interesting sentences as he read. Not having a talent for preaching, he invited two or three ministers, who lived in the neighbourhood, to "preach in his school-room, when they had opportunity;"* and much did it rejoice his heart to see several persons attend. But it was several years after, before the gospel was preached there on Lord's-days; as those ministers were engaged with their respective churches and congregations. In the year 1808, he heard of Mr. Allen, of Norwich, who was at that time disengaged: he came; and, by his preaching, a larger congregation was collected. This sight much rejoiced the heart of our friend, as he had often prayed that the Lord would raise a cause for Christ in his native village. For several years he found it difficult to support the preacher, as he had to do it chiefly himself; afterwards, it pleased the Lord to send a person of considerable property to live in the neighbourhood, who constantly attended, and was very useful; other persons

* The Rev. J. Hooke, of Ingham; J. T. Beard, of Worsted; and Charles Chamberlain, of Warwick.

also of respectability came to hear, and the school-room became too small for the congregation. Frequently did our friend solicit the advice and assistance of Christians with whom he was acquainted, relative to building a house for the Lord. To the joy of his heart, in the spring of the year 1810, a few relatives and friends were collected, who consulted on what was best to be done, in reference to the erection of a place of worship. Prayer was offered to God for his direction and blessing; a subscription of eighty-seven pounds was made, and a plan formed for building a meeting-house, by those persons, some of whom were members of a neighbouring Baptist church. A double concern for the inhabitants of that village was felt by individuals, it being their native place. And here another proof of *the love of our friend* to the Redeemer's interest was manifested, who, though he had a weak constitution, and a school to attend, took all the concerns upon himself to procure teams to convey the materials for the place of worship to the ground appointed for its erection, &c.; and much did it rejoice his heart, to find many of his neighbours very friendly in assisting to get the materials together. When the day arrived that the building was finished, great was the happiness that he experienced. A church formed; a minister (Mr. William Spurgeon) ordained; and himself a deacon in the little society. For several years before his death, he had been attacked with a disorder on his lungs; and in the summer of the year 1814, he was so sharply seized, that he was obliged to give up his school, not being able to speak without injuring himself. From this attack, he a little recovered, so that he was enabled to get to the house of the Lord. On the 29th of November, 1814, early in the morning, he was suddenly seized with a pain in his chest, and could scarcely speak without a groan. He requested his pastor, and his friends, to be sent for, who came and prayed with him; but it was seldom that he could speak, except a little in the forenoon, at which time he requested his

minister to preach a funeral sermon from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, "I have fought a good fight," &c. A friend, who visited him, was noticing his usefulness in the cause of the Saviour: to which he replied, with tears in his eyes, (which were expressive of the humility of his mind,) "I have done nothing! I have done nothing! I am an unprofitable servant; yet I bless the Lord that he gave me a heart for these things; and Oh! that many may have to bless God on this account when I am dead." At another time, when he was asked what was the state of his mind: he said, "Calm and easy." During the forenoon, he called his children around his bed, and lifted up his eyes and heart to God on their behalf; but could utter only a little. At one time, when looking at his dear wife, he said, "I wish it were over! I am dying, but am calm." After this, a friend said to him, "Though you cannot speak you can signify that Jesus is precious to you, by squeezing my hand;" which he did, and looked very happy. And when one said to him, You will soon be with your Lord; he replied, "I hope I shall." As it respects his experience in general, though he had at all times a good hope, through grace, yet he had many fears of his interest in Christ. Frequently, during his health, he was as if tossed about upon the ocean; but when he was dying, the wind ceased, and there was a calm! After conflicting with the pangs of death from one o'clock in the morning till half-past five in the evening, he breathed his last, on Tuesday, November 29, 1814, in the fifty-sixth year of his age.

Thus died this useful servant of the Lord, whom he had raised up to aid the cause of the Saviour in a benighted village. May others, by this example, be stimulated to "go and do likewise." He was buried in the ground belonging to the meeting, according to his request; at which time his pastor preached on the occasion, from Matthew, xxiv. 44, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Review.

The Confessions of an Arian Minister; containing a Narrative of his Conversion, and exhibiting his present Views of the principal Doctrines of the Gospel: in a Letter to his Son.
By William Gellibrand. Williams & Co. Stationers'-court.

THE triumphs of the gospel are not more visible in the conversion of avowed unbelievers, by turning them from vice and profligacy, than in that of those who have arrogated to themselves the title of *rational* Christians; when their lofty looks, and high thoughts, are brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. The advocates of evangelical truth have been lately furnished with some splendid examples of its influence in this respect. We have heard of one who desired a Socinian minister to come and reside in the place where he dwelt; who urged as a reason, alluding to the Trinitarian doctrines, "that the whole city was given to idolatry." This gentleman is now resting his hopes of eternal salvation upon these despised doctrines! and the pamphlet before us affords another instance of the enlightening, humbling, and sanctifying effects of the doctrines of grace; which we suppose will astound the late friends of the author, and lead them again to exclaim against the spread of fanaticism and madness! As, however, Mr. Gellibrand seems to us to have produced sufficient proofs of sobriety and sanity, we shall gratify our readers with giving a short sketch of these "Confessions," hoping they will not be satisfied without perusing the whole.

Mr. Gellibrand was educated at Hoxton, under the late Drs. Savage and Kippis, and the present Dr. Rees. He succeeded Dr. Price at Newington-green, where he preached two years; removed to Ringwood, where he remained several years; and in 1792 settled at Brentford, in Middlesex. Of this period of his

ministry he remarks, "that he felt little, or no interest, in the services of religion; that the cold, the dry, and the uninteresting scheme he had embraced, could not keep it alive in his soul; and, therefore, in 1797, he resolved on giving up the ministry, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of his friends to continue it." He adds, "But no entreaty could prevail upon me to continue to perform services in which my heart was not engaged. I was hastening fast to a state of irreligion and unbelief; I was immersed in the pursuits, in the pleasures, and Oh! sad to relate, in many of the vices of the world!" What an awful spectacle! and yet this gentleman was courted to continue in his office! What an idea does this give us of the state of religion in a congregation, which was satisfied with such a minister, when contrasted with the congregations of the Flavels, the Howes, or the Baxters, of a former age! "How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed!"

Two years afterwards, in the year 1805, he left the ministry, and cultivated a small farm in Hertfordshire. "Here," says the author, "I expected to find that balm which might heal the wounds of the heart; and thought that being removed from the busy haunts of men, that I should be removed from the temptations of the world: but I experienced, in retirement, the need of religion to support my virtue, and found that nothing but the grace of God could either restore the soul, or preserve it from evil. In this state of apathy and indifference to every spiritual concern, I continued till towards the latter end of the summer of 1816, at which period, I firmly believe, that the first truly Christian impression was made upon my mind."

The manner in which our author describes the means which, through a divine blessing, led to his renova-

tion of heart, and consequent alteration of sentiments, is very affecting. Restoring family prayer, which had been long laid aside, and reading Doddridge's Family Instructor on these occasions, appear to have been attended with the most blessed results.

Passing over much interesting matter, for want of room, we copy a passage which, for its beauty and simplicity, we think can hardly be excelled. In consequence of the indisposition of the minister, (Mr. Anderson, of Chalfont,) Mr. Gellibrand was called upon to take the devotional services of the Lord's-day. He says—

"I had not, for some years, prayed in public; I felt a degree of perturbation at the thought of standing between God and his people. The request was unexpected—the time pressing. I began the solemn service of the morning; as I proceeded, I recovered my composure—I became warm and interested—I approached the throne of God—I laid my hand upon the altar of the covenant—and lo! the angel of the Lord took, as it were, a live coal from the altar, and applied it not only to my lips, but to my conscience, to my heart, and to my understanding. To my understanding, for it became enlightened; to my heart, for it was made willing to receive the truth; to my conscience, for it was delivered from the burden of guilt; and to my lips, for from that hour have I had utterance given me to declare what God has done for my soul. Thus I was lost, and am found—I was dead, and am alive—I was blind, but now I see. From a state of nature, I have been brought into a state of grace—from a state of open hostility, to the truths of the gospel, to a state of peace and love—from a state of darkness and delusion, to a state of life and confidence."

With such feelings, we can easily account for the anxiety expressed by the author for the welfare of his son; who, it seems, has been led in a great measure, through the influence of the example and instructions of his father, to embrace the Arian scheme. We hope this young gentleman will seriously consider the admonitions of his father, and be speedily convinced, that the Arian and Socinian schemes of religion are only suited to an unregene-

rate heart, and a worldly spirit. The following extract upon this subject, will exhibit the heart of a Christian father:

"It is not, nor can it be, as many imagine, a matter of small moment what you believe, whether you are well grounded or not in the faith once delivered to the saints; and surely it is of awful concern whether you build your hopes of final acceptance with God on a just or a mistaken hypothesis—whether you erect your house upon the sand or upon a rock."

Sketches of Human Nature; or, Hints, chiefly relating to the duties and difficulties that occur in the intercourse of Christians with one another, and with the world. By William Innes, Minister of the Gospel. Second edit. considerably enlarged.

THE Lord of heaven and earth is stiled in the sacred oracles, the God of Peace, and all his children are assured of his approbation and felicitating presence if they live in peace among themselves. When the Son of God came into our world, the Roman arms had generally triumphed, and her soldiers rested from their toils; the temple of Janus was shut, and peace dwelt among the nations. The Redeemer visited our world, having assumed our nature, to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, so making peace, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And there never was an instructor who exhibited a more impressive or unceasing example of a peaceful conduct, nor one who more earnestly inculcated its necessity on all who heard him, and emphatically on his disciples. The Christian religion is one of mercy and peace; and, at the birth of Christ, the holy, enraptured spirits of heaven, addressing the attentive pastors of Judea, said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." "As much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men," were the words of the Lord, and they exactly express the spirit of that dispensation of truth and grace which he introduced.

Mr. Innes is a minister of him who was meek and lowly in heart, and has acted quite in character in giving to the public the work now before us. The first edition of it was highly valued by the late Mr. Fuller, of Kettering, whose piety, discernment, and integrity, have been but rarely equalled. He esteemed it for its healing tendency, a quality, it must be admitted, of great worth in a world of sin, of ignorance, and of frequent dissension.

As our author has written with brevity, perspicuity, tenderness, manifestly in the fear of God, and with much good sense, on the several subjects he has discussed, it will convey some idea of the value of his book, if we give the heads of the sections under which the particular articles are placed:

"1. Of the discipline of a church, offences, &c. 2. Of the pernicious effects of tale-bearing, of judging and speaking rashly, &c. 3. Respecting pastors and teachers. 4. Remarks on miscellaneous subjects, such as the duty of embracing every opportunity of doing good—the evil of party spirit—a few questions, fitted to promote among Christians a spirit of mutual forbearance," &c.

So much are we pleased with this performance, that we should be destitute of every degree of benevolent feeling if we did not strongly recommend it. Let it be read by every Christian pastor, and by the members of Christian churches of every denomination. Let the poor have it given, or lent to them, so that no one may be without the benefit of its instructions. The venerable Fuller handed about his copy of the first edition till it was quite worn. This volume should be a part of the furniture, at least, of every vestry in the kingdom—a number should be purchased and deposited there for general circulation through the church; and it would be well if every member perused it, with deep attention and fervent prayer, once a year.

The Life and Memoir of the late Rev. John Hirst, forty-two years Pastor of the Baptist Church at

Bacup: containing also a short account of several Ministers, particularly Messrs. Bamford, Hindle, Dickinson, &c. By James Hargreaves.

THIS Christian pastor, whose life is here presented to the public, appears to have been a venerable and highly respected man, whose faith and holiness greatly merit general regard and imitation. Our author informs us what his motives for writing this account of his departed brother were, and among them we find the following: "to comply with the wishes of his friends who earnestly requested it; and to exhibit another pattern of the Redeemer's free, rich, and sovereign mercy, as displayed in the real conversion, sweet experience, holy life, useful labours, and happy death, of Mr. Hirst." In the work before us, to use the writer's words, "no attempt has been made to form a creed, and to define and paint a character, such as would ensure approbation and applause, and then to ascribe that creed, and that character to Mr. Hirst; but honestly to relate both, as they really were, or as they appeared to be, to the view of his biographer." The internal evidence of the truth of this is such, as to leave no room for doubting concerning it. With great artlessness, without any apparent attempt at arrangement, every thing is related as it occurred. We think there is far too much of minute detail, and we wish there were generally fewer instances of the exposure of horrible temptations and occurrences in the lives of good men, or of improper conduct manifested toward them by others: there are many things which it is of little use to any one to have published; and, to the far greater part, such revelations are injurious. Temptations to self-destruction, painful disputes among brethren, and the evil conduct of those who belong to other denominations, can rarely, if ever, be publicly communicated with preponderating advantage. Mr. Hargreaves writes like an affectionate and pious man: his intentions are evidently of the best kind, and the general tendency of his work is good.

A short Sketch of the Rise and History of the Baptist Church at Bacup: containing some account of the Churches at Clough-fold, Rodhillend, Rawden, Salendine Nook, Accrington, Blackburn, Cowling-Hill, Goodshaw, &c. Also, a short Account of several Ministers, particularly Messrs. Mitchel, Crosley, Moore, Piccop, Lord, Turner, Holden, Nuttall, Ashworth, &c. By James Hargreaves.

WE cannot recommend this pamphlet as eminently adapted for general usefulness. As a private document, for the use of those pious people who reside within the circle in which the events it records transpired, it may have its importance.

The Young Child's Catechism; or, a plain Catechism for the lower classes of Scholars in Sunday Schools. By James Hargreaves. Third edition.

RECOLLECTING that this tract is for the use of, not only children, but very young ones, and that our author proposes to teach them sense as well as sound, and to avoid long and uncommon words, such as immensity, omnipresence, &c. we cannot, with regard to every part of his catechism say, that he has fulfilled his expressed intentions. Without explanation, the children are informed, that God is a spirit, that he is holy, and that he is the benefactor and lawgiver of mankind. Adam is represented as having offended Jehovah, defiled our nature, and, as our representative, incurred the curse of the law; in consequence of which, we are all shapen in iniquity, &c. All mankind are said to be dead in sin. The question, Will all the sinners of mankind be saved by Christ is asked, and to this it is replied, No, only those will be saved by Christ, who are made willing, &c. In the twelfth page, the question of moral inability is introduced. Now, we ask, are these the subjects for little children? are they taught sense, or sound, when they learn them? We think the latter. We believe the general doctrines con-

tained in this tract, but it is not adapted to the capacities of those for whom it was expressly written.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Just published,

The first and second Number of a series of Tracts, entitled, The Protestant's Warning, have been lately published, price 1d. or 7s. per 100, containing extracts from Fox's Book of Martyrs, &c. intending to show the danger of setting up the Catholic superstition in this land.

Periodical Accounts, No. XXXII. of the Baptist Mission.

Pædobaptismal Regeneration examined; by the Rev. William Giles.

Our Juvenile Readers are requested to attend to the following information:

Astronomy rendered familiar to the capacity of youth, by a method both entertaining and instructive. Dedicated by permission, to Deane Walker, Esq. Elton's Transparent Orrery, comprising eight coloured scenes, descriptive of the Planetary System, which are put in motion at pleasure; viz. 1. The Earth, with its Atmosphere. 2. The two-fold motion of the Earth. 3. The signs of the Zodiac. 4. The Constellation Orion. 5. The Moon, her various Phases and Appearances. 6. Solar Eclipse. 7. Lunar Eclipse. 8. Solar System.

The Transparent Orrery can be used by day-light, or in the evening, by placing a candle behind, thus affording to the domestic circle, or a company of juvenile associates, the most useful and instructive amusement. It is fixed in a neat mahogany case, nine and a half inches by seven and a half, forming an appropriate piece of furniture, as a companion to the Globes; with a descriptive pamphlet.—The public having manifested their decided approbation of this interesting article, the publishers have endeavoured to render it as acceptable as possible, and have added an eighth scene. The constellation Orion, by which the constellations are further explained. This additional scene may be had separate by the former purchasers.

In the Press.

A Six Weeks Course of Prayers for the use of Families; By the Rev. William Smith, author of a System of Prayer.

Missionary Retrospect and Foreign Intelligence.

BAPTIST MISSION.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Mr. Ward, dated Serampore, November 18, 1816.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"Yours, of May last year, is now before me. Remember me very affectionately to the good Quaker. I feel a great regard for that society on many accounts; and, particularly, when I remember what my dear mother used to tell me, that she owed her first awakenings to the labours of a Quaker in the town-hall at Derby. For all the good news of Bible Associations in yours, accept my thanks.

"I resumed this on the 13th of December, 1816. Since I began it, in November, brother Carey has been on the verge of the grave, according to our apprehensions; but in the Divine counsels, I hope he was never more sure of life: he is not yet well. In the present week he has had a slight return of an intermittent fever; but, I trust, these are only the relics of that which was so formidable; and that the medicinal course he has adopted, will remove the present symptoms, and give him opportunity of complete recovery.

"I rejoice, my brother, to see you so well employed for Ireland, &c. This is the most blessed life—a life of *doing* good. The useful, or active vigorous services, in enlightening, converting, and making men holy, was that which distinguished the primitive days, and this is the glorious feature of the present day; setting the shoulders steadily to the work of heaving the mountain from an oppressed and miserable world. The Lord himself give you all the strength of giants herein.

"We have much comfort in brother and sister Randall; I hope we shall now make good paper.

"Remember me very affectionately to all whom I know in London. Pray for us. Oh! for some cooling, refreshing, and life-giving streams in this land of sterility. I have had a good deal of conversation lately with a Bramhun, who has been reading the gospel for years, and who begs to be baptized next Lord's day. He says, when he was at Loadiana, in Hindoostan, an English

doctor saw him with the Bengalee Testament in his hand, and threatened to beat him for reading the book. The Bramhun stared at this "worse for mending," and asked him, why he was to be beat for loving and reading this book.

"Ever, my dear brother, yours,

W. WARD."

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. John Davis, one of the Missionaries at Eimeo, to the Rev. W. Cowper, New South Wales, dated March 30, 1816.

"IN the beginning of November (1815) peace was apparently restored between the contending parties: and Pomare returned to Tabiete, to reinstate the fugitives in their different lands. He was accompanied not only by them, but by almost all the men who had renounced heathenism. At first, all things appeared to go on well; but suddenly hostilities recommenced, and the Atahuruans attempted, by a desperate effort, to support their tottering cause; their prophet assuring them of success. They came upon the king and his people on the Sabbath-day, November 12, at the time of morning-prayer, expecting that being so engaged, they would easily be thrown into confusion. This we had anticipated as a probable occurrence, and had, therefore, warned our people against it; in consequence of which, they carried their arms with them wherever they went. Notwithstanding which, however, the sudden approach, and immediate attack of the Atahuruans, and others, threw them into considerable confusion, and some gave way; but they soon rallied again, as the Raistians, and the people of Eimeo, had kept their ground. Several fell on both sides; but on the side of the Atahuruans, Upufara, a principal chief, was killed. This event, as soon as it was known, turned the scale, and Pomare's party gained a complete victory. But he treated the vanquished with great lenity and moderation, which had the happiest effect; for all exclaimed that the new religion must needs be good, because it produced such good effects: they declared, also, that their

gods were cruel and false, had deceived them, and sought their ruin; and, therefore, they were resolved to trust them no longer.

"On the evening of the day, when the confusion of the battle was over, the king and his people, with many of the idolaters, united in one large assembly to worship the God of heaven and earth, and returned him thanks for the events of the day.

"After this, Pomare, by universal consent, was re-established in his government of the whole of Tahiti, and its dependencies; which he had lost by the general rebellion in November, 1808.

"Since this affair, Pomare had continued in Tahiti, making arrangements respecting the several districts—overthrowing all the vestiges of idolatry—destroying the gods, morais, &c. the chiefs zealously assisting in their destruction: and they are now employed in erecting places of worship for the true God, in every district all around the island, the whole of which is now professedly Christian, and so is Eimeo; and, in great measure, the leeward islands also, the chiefs of which entreat us, by every opportunity, to come over and help them."

PAPAL OPPOSITION

TO THE

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

(From Tracts entitled "*Antibiblion*," &c.)

NUREMBERG.—We learn with grief and horror, that the *Bible Institution* here, by the influence of the Pope's Bull, is "now totally annihilated; the oldest of all, and among the most efficient societies on the Continent, after having existed thirteen years!" No. ii. page 28.

The *ANTIBIBLION*, or *PAPAL TOCSIN*, of which three Nos. have reached us, appears to be a highly respectable work, and claims the attention of all who are concerned to have our beloved country preserved from Popery and arbitrary power.

No. I. informs us, that the Jesuits have prevailed so far in *Bavaria*, as to obtain an express prohibition, and even a *total suppression*, of all Bible Associations: whether connected with foreign countries, or otherwise! The learned editor has given also a Latin copy, and trans-

lation of the first bull against Bible Societies, issued from Rome, June 29, 1816, by Pope Pius VII. to the Archbishop of Gnezn, Primate of Poland. We recommend to our readers particularly, an extract from a speech by the late Speaker of the House of Commons, May 14, 1813, respecting Roman Catholic oaths, from which it appears, that the Sovereign Pontiff, so lately as in the year 1809, "has declared, that all oaths taken to the prejudice of the church are null and void."

No. II. exhibits a free exposure of the sophistry by which the Pope's first bull is defended, with further proofs of papal intolerance.

No. III. contains another bull, or papal brief, against Bible Societies, dated September, 1816.

If it be said, "Why does not his Holiness send a bull to Dublin, or to London?" the editor will reply, that "his Holiness is too wise for that, knowing full well how much better it is to give private instructions to the *Murrays*, *Milners*, *Gandolphys*, and *Poynters* visiting him at Rome, than to disturb the repose of Protestants in this empire, who seem at this moment half willing to invest the determined foes of Protestantism with political power and legislative authority." page 26.

Why should not the simple and the unlearned read the scriptures? The Pope gives many reasons: we extract one only, as a curiosity—because *the beast was not allowed to touch the mountain*. His words are, "Unde recte fuit olim in lege divina statutum, (Exod. xix. 12.) ut bestia quæ montem tetigerit lapidetur; ne videlicet simplex aliquis et indortus præsumat ad sublimitatem scripturæ sacræ perlingere, vel etiam aliis prædicare, &c. Whence it was rightly ordained of old in the divine law, (Exod. xix. 12.) that the beast which shall touch the mountain should be stoned; lest, truly, any simple and unlearned person should presume to reach after the height of sacred scripture, or even proclaim it to others," &c. (page 35.) A comment full of the most impious hypocrisy, and the most ridiculous absurdity—insulting to the poor and the unlearned, and, in short, in every view worthy of the daring blasphemer by whose authority it has been published.

"Another bull, addressed to the metropolitan bishop of St. Petersburg, is likely soon to make its appearance."

We subjoin an *Address to Protestants*, which is circulated by the author of the *Antibiblion*:

"London, June, 1817.

"The apparent indifference, and even apathy of Protestants to the rapid increase of Popery throughout Europe, but especially within the United Kingdom, gave occasion to the present publication; in which the views of the sovereign pontiff, since his power has been restored by Protestant arms, are clearly developed. It is impossible to stifle the evidence contained in this work, of a design on the part of the Papal Hierarchy, to spread its unscriptural doctrines, and enforce its unchristian restraints, in all countries where Roman Catholic agents are found. Two pontifical bulls against Bible Societies, (the first directed to the archbishop of Gnezn, the second to the archbishop of Mogileff,) are given in the Nos. already published.

"The erection in our own country of many hundred new chapels for popish worship during the last twenty-five years, might have roused the attention of British Protestants, if no additional proof had been given of the progress of that religion: but when the existence, in the very heart of the kingdom, of an extensive College of Jesuits has been proved, which Order was avowedly revived for the purpose of extirpating the Protestant faith;—when the Jesuits in general, and this establishment in particular, have been openly defended and applauded by the English Roman Catholics, who have thus made common cause with those agents of error and crime, and identified the interests of the Jesuits with their own; when the Romish priesthood, both in England and Ireland, have shown unusual activity in making converts to their creed, and in opposing the progress of Education and the circulation of the Scriptures, the evidence of increased hostility on the part of Popery becomes irresistible; furnishing a powerful incentive to those Protestants who value their own privileges, whether civil or religious, to employ the sober and legitimate means of argument and information for the purpose of enlightening the public mind, and of awakening an adequate degree of feeling upon a question of vital importance to our Protestant Church and State.

"When, in addition to these evils of a more domestic character, we observe the same incurable spirit of hostility manifested over the whole continent;—when we find the sanguinary tribunal of the Inquisition again obtruded upon the Christian world, and see its prisons opened for the reception of all who dare to think or act for themselves, and its

power exerted in directing what works shall be printed, or what shall be read;—when we find the present Pope fulminating one bull after another against *all* translations of the Bible in the vulgar tongue (without which the world at large can neither read nor understand it), and anathematizing those societies and individuals who have committed the unpardonable crime of dispersing the Scriptures of truth;—when we hear the same authority declaring in the nineteenth century, that all Protestants are '*heretics*,' out of the pale of salvation, and that it is absolutely contrary both to the principles and practice of Roman Catholics to afford toleration to them, or to their church; we must be still further convinced of the duty of rallying round the citadel of Biblical truth and British liberty, and are obliged to conclude that the present advocates of such a cause as Popery, and of its unexplained and inexplicable claims, are almost without excuse.

"Under these circumstances it can hardly be doubted, that they who retain any sense of the value of that religious and political freedom for which the best blood of our martyrs and warriors has flowed; and especially, that all who feel the importance of a free circulation of the Scriptures both at home and abroad, will endeavour to assist in extending the means of authentic information afforded by publications on this subject, while they are conducted with moderation and charity, and betray no unchristian or vindictive spirit. Of this nature the *ANTIBIBLION* is intended to be:—how far it has answered that character, the reader may judge; and it is hoped, that Protestants of every denomination will continue to promote the work, by contributing to its matter and encouraging its sale.

"If the rapid and progressive encroachments of Popery, within these few years, do not excite some feeling of alarm, yet, at least, they may tend to enliven the zeal of Protestants, or awaken them from that lethargic state into which too many have unhappily fallen. It is time, surely, to arise and shake off the careless habits of the age; lest our feet, accustomed to walk with indifference over the treacherous surface of a Papal volcano, should, in a moment of unconcern, sink down to rise no more! If the noxious smoke and exhalations of the labouring mountain do not now disturb our repose, it may be too late hereafter to escape from the fatal eruption, when it suddenly bursts upon the Christian world!"

Domestic Religious Intelligence.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS.

THE return of this interesting season, and the assembling together of so many of the ministers and followers of our Lord Jesus, to promote the extension of his kingdom, both at home and abroad, have again produced pleasure and gratification to the churches in the metropolis: and, we doubt not, but these annual meetings will be productive of the most solid advantages, not only in promoting a union of the most desirable kind—a union of knowledge and affection between those who having the same “Lord,” the same “faith,” and the same “baptism,” would not otherwise have had opportunity of uniting for the purpose of diffusing the influence of the “common salvation.” We congratulate, therefore, our churches in town and country, on the gratifying prospect which now opens before them; and confidently anticipate, that by these means the peace and prosperity of the Baptist denomination will be greatly promoted. In the East and West Indies, new churches, founded upon the principles on which the English Baptist churches are established, are rising up; in Ireland, several similar societies are already collected; and in our own country, they are annually increasing. May it be said of them, in reference to the purity of their faith and discipline, “They look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and (to the enemies of truth and righteousness,) terrible as an army with banners.” We proceed to give some short account of these meetings, in the order in which they were held.

On Tuesday evening, June 24, the Rev. Dr. Ryland preached an affecting and instructive sermon at Carter-lane, from John, xi. 26, “Jesus wept.” Messrs. Tomlin of Chesham, and Hinton, of Oxford, conducted the devotional services.

BAPTIST ITINERANT SOCIETY.

A MEETING of the friends of this society was held at the City of London Tavern, on Wednesday morning, the

25th June, James Pritt, Esq. the Treasurer, in the chair. Dr. Steadman having engaged in prayer, the Report of the Committee proceedings, for the past year, was read: after which, the following Resolutions were adopted unanimously:

It was moved by Mr. Edwards, and seconded by Mr. Upton,

1. That, in the opinion of this meeting, the Report now read, affords evidence of the excellence and utility of this society, and the necessity of increased exertions in promoting itinerant and village preaching.

It was moved by Mr. Shirley, of Sevenoaks, and seconded by Mr. Giles, of Lymington,

2. That the thanks of this meeting are due to the ministers who are engaged under the patronage of this society, for their laborious exertions in diffusing the knowledge of divine truth in villages and other benighted parts of our own country.

It was moved by Mr. Weare, of Ipswich, and seconded by Dr. Steadman, of Bradford,

3. That the Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee of the society are entitled to the cordial thanks of this meeting, for their attention to the concerns of this society during the past year.

It was moved by Mr. Chin, of Walworth, and seconded by Mr. Welch, of Newbury,

4. That this meeting observe with pleasure the continued and increasing exertions and success of the Walworth Auxiliary Society, and request the supporters of that institution to accept their cordial thanks for their liberal contributions.

It was moved by Mr. Humphrey, of Collumpton, Devonshire, and seconded by Mr. Jones, of Wolston, near Coventry,

5. That the thanks of this meeting be given to Mr. John Deakin, of Hockley, near Birmingham, for his very liberal contributions to the funds of this society in the past year.*

It was moved by Thomas Thompson, Esq., of Brixton, and seconded by Lieut. Buck, of the Bengal Artillery,

* 20*l.* and 40*l.* since Christmas last.

6. That this meeting, while they cordially congratulate the Committee of the Baptist Itinerant Society on the happy effects which, through the Divine blessing, have resulted from their past exertions, cannot help expressing their regret at the inadequacy of its funds to pursue its benevolent plans with spirit, and being satisfied that nothing further is wanted to ensure the support so much needed, than the direction of the more general attention of the friends of Christianity in Britain to these important objects; they therefore recommend to ministers, and others, the immediate formation of auxiliary societies in town and country.

The Report read on this occasion is of an encouraging nature, and will furnish gratifying extracts for a future No. of the Magazine. We are happy to find, that the constitution of the society is *enlarged*, and that the sphere of its operations now extends to the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Man, Alderney, Sark, and Scilly; and that it will encourage, in addition to the preaching of the gospel, the establishment of Sunday schools, and the more general dispersion of the sacred scriptures and religious tracts. There is still a small balance in the hands of the Treasurer; and we are persuaded, that when the Committee are inclined to "attempt great things," they may "expect great things." The enlargement of its plan, if it be actively and suitably carried into effect, will increase both the *friends* and the *funds* of the institution.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

On the same day, at eleven o'clock, the friends of this great cause met at Spa-fields, and the Rev. J. Kinghorn, of Norwich, preached from Psalm xcvi. 3, "Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all nations." The devotional services were conducted by Messrs. Griffin, Dr. Rippon, Rees, of Rodborough, and Ivimey.

In the evening, at six, met again at Sion-chapel, when the Rev. W. Winterbotham, of Horsley, preached from Mal. i. 11, "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." The devotional services were conducted by Messrs. Shirley,

of Sevenoaks, and Cox, and Shenston, of London.

We expect to be able to furnish our readers with a compendium of these sermons in future Nos. of our work. The meetings were as well attended as at any former period, and the collections, though not equal to former years, were good. Much happiness appeared to be felt by those who on these occasions were praying—"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

GENERAL MEETING.

THE General Meeting was held at Dr. Rippon's, Carter-lane, on Thursday, at eight o'clock in the morning, and was very numerously attended. The ministers from different counties gave very gratifying reports of the state of religion, which we shall give in our next. Dr. Rippon was in the chair. Messrs. Hutchings and Dyer engaged in prayer.

The Stepney Academical Institution met at Salters'-hall, at twelve o'clock, when Mr. Hinton preached, from Gal. ii. 15. 16. and Mr. Hoby, and Dr. Winter engaged in prayer.—Forty-five pounds were collected for the Institution. Mr. Hinton was requested to print his sermon.

In the evening, at Salters'-hall, at half-past six, Messrs. Hutchings, Morgan, and Dr. Ryland engaged in prayer. A very interesting Report was read by Mr. Dyer, of Reading. The sums collected for the mission amounted to about £260.

BAPTIST IRISH SOCIETY.

THE third annual meeting was held at the City of London Tavern, Bishopsgate-street, on Friday the 27th, Joseph Butterworth, Esq. M. P. in the chair. The limits of our work absolutely preclude our giving any thing like a tolerable sketch of the speeches delivered on this occasion: the following is an imperfect account hastily taken, but a more extended one may be expected from a short-hand writer employed on the occasion through the medium of the Philanthropic Gazette.

After singing the 117th Psalm, and prayer by Mr. William Shenston, the Secretary read the Report, and,

The Rev. F. A. Cox, in rising to propose the approval of the Report, said it had been intimated that expectation would be disappointed; this, however, had appeared to be excessive modesty in the Committee, which all must have discovered who had heard that Report. He had felt strongly when reading the history of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, but he thought the nineteenth century would exceed that period: that was the first reformation, but this is the second;—that under the auspices of Henry VIII. this under a much more exalted monarch, George III. He had often wished that the mantle of Luther had descended upon genuine descendants of that great man; but though it had been three centuries in falling, it had at length rested, and a double portion of the same spirit was now discovered. He remembered Brydone standing on the top of Etna, comprehending a circumference of 1000 miles; but we stand upon a higher eminence, and he beheld the Sun of Righteousness, which was now illuminating an apostatized world. The light which had tinged the dark clouds of India with its beams, had increased till its extended rays had begun to illumine the whole of Ireland. Great Britain, so eminent for its military prowess, he congratulated more for moral and spiritual exploits. Her geographers had visited foreign lands from motives of curiosity; but now their object would be to cut a channel for the waters of the sanctuary to flow throughout all the earth.

Mr. Cox congratulated those persons who had originated this society, especially for teaching the Irish language. Suppose this kingdom was to become subject to the Chinese empire, and our conquerors were to determine to communicate nothing for our use but through their own language: however much we may thank them for their benevolent intentions, we should thank them more for imparting the designed benefits in our native language. He congratulated the ladies, who had raised the last year upwards of 70*l.* for the society. He congratulated the worthy Chairman, who, if he could have his wish, should not only have M. P. Member of Parliament, affixed to his name; but M. B. Minister of Benevolence.

Dr. Steadman felt a considerable degree of diffidence, not because disappointed in the Report, nor from the number who now attended, but from two causes.—Two years since, this meeting wished him to make some more direct efforts, and last year the Chairman ex-

pressed his desire, that he should visit Ireland; with which request he would gladly have complied. This arose from want of *ability*, not of inclination. He was sure he could say nothing interesting after the Report, and after the eloquent address just delivered. He had no claims to eloquence; if he had, he had no need on this occasion of employing it. Every Christian present, and in the British empire, must feel this society has a claim on his efforts. Efforts to do good, ought to employ, and have very extensively employed British Christians. To teach illiterate men to read the scriptures, is an object nearly allied to his, who put that book in our hands; and to lead to a *further* acquaintance with it, still more perfectly accords with his design.

It has been observed, that this period is a second reformation; and it is delightful to observe in how admirable a way Providence brings about its designs by degrees. The reformation was but partial, though as great as could then be expected: it has ever since been gradually increasing, but vastly accelerating within our own recollection.

When I compare what I remember, I congratulate my country on its improvement. Could such a society have been convened together twenty-five or twenty-six years ago? Perhaps, if all the societies then existing had been condensed in one, it would not have been more numerous than that now assembled. If I were to go to Ireland, I would congratulate the Irish people—the children of the schools—in those parts especially in which the Irish language is taught. He was ready to ask, Why was this plan not resorted to before? He would congratulate them on the fetters of Popery being much relaxed, and trusted they would be more and more loosened, till they were utterly shaken off. The revelation of the scriptures will effect this. What effected the Reformation? Preaching the word was very efficient, but especially circulating the scriptures. To them they appealed: they saw written—"Accomplished by the finger of God." You know the happy effects. Britain threw off the yoke: Ireland will do the same, only give time and scope for the operation. No force is applied—no comments employed; and can we hesitate when the God of the Bible speaks intelligibly? The Bible asks no comment to support its authority, any more than it requires the aid of the sun to emblazon its lustre. I anticipate the triumphs of truth. Were the society to stop where it is, very important services have already been rendered.

Souls have been converted—instruction communicated. Go on, ladies: go on friends. If motives are pure, and God forbid we should suspect them, we may be certain of success. Achievements have been referred to, but what expense have they cost? What lives of our fellow-creatures? But these have been unstained by blood: all is advantage here. Not only blood has been spared, but the *life of the soul* promoted. Not only temporal good—but spiritual good have been communicated in the highest degree. The Dr. added a sentiment of Doddridge, on the worth of one soul. Many souls have been put in possession of this salvation by the exertions of this society. Yes: rising superior to all difficulties, and humbly imitating the example of Christ our Redeemer, let us imitate his example: the more we are like him, the more felicity now and for ever!

Go on, and prosper. Increasing assistance will come in. The list of supporters will strengthen your faith, and be a stimulus to farther exertions.

The Rev. Edmond Rogers (one of the society's missionaries.) "When you consider," said he, "that I am just come from the wilds of Connaught, you may conceive mine an awkward situation. Some may expect a fine speech, but those who know me, know that I am no great speechifier. All I can do, is to state a few facts, or rather confirm the facts already mentioned in the Report. You have heard of the horrors of Popery and superstition; but I have seen them. A woman, with a little child, ascended Crogh Patrick to perform penance; a shower of snow fell, and she and her infant fell victims to superstition. You are pointed to another mountain—to Calvary, where a stream flows which cleanseth from all sin. You may think this story incredible: but why should you do so? Consider what was formerly our condition in England, when there were no scriptures. Ireland had been shamefully neglected; she had been for years crying in the language of Esau, when hearing of attentions to the Hindoos and Africans, 'Hast thou but one blessing, Oh my father!' You have heard of one girl, fifteen years of age, who had committed to memory 79 chapters; another of seven years, who committed six chapters in six days! It will be vain for priests to expect confession or penances from them if they know the scriptures; as a priest confessed to me, with pain. I agreed with him. *We never quarrel.* He thought the children would know as much of the scrip-

tures as their priests. We were quite of one mind on that subject. The Pope's bull has lately declared, that if the scriptures are circulated, their *holy religion* will be destroyed. Several priests have opposed the schools, and have cursed families from the altar with *eternal damnation*, because they had the heretics' book. Not long before I left Connaught, a priest expressed to his large congregation his expectation, that the earth would swallow their cabins, and all they contained, because Testaments were in them. A poor man, to avoid this danger, tied two to a stick stuck in the ground in his garden, to see if the earth would swallow them up! Finding it did not, he has since used them without fear. When I collected in Wales last summer, a poor woman wished she could purchase a New Testament, but had but two-pence; she said, however, she would give it, which was her all, to have that verse printed—'In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.' The Captain of our salvation was now in Ireland, entering it in his chariot; and Satan was trembling at the sound of his chariot wheels." Mr. Rogers said, he had thought of leaving Ireland: the best place he ever had to preach in was an Irish cabin; he would, therefore, go back with double vigour, if the society would send him. There was a great spirit of inquiry; some were now so bold as to answer the priest without hesitation; several parents had left mass, in consequence of the children going to school. A priest called upon them to know why? 'Oh,' said they, 'we have read the word of God, and find not a word of penances in it, and we will never go to chapel again; if we die to-morrow, we shall not want the anointing from you, as we have a better priest, the High-priest of our profession!' A school-master, (all of whom are employed by the society, seem enlightened to discern the absurdities of Popery,) spoke very boldly to a bishop lately, in presence of 1,000 persons. 'Do you know your Catechism?' said the bishop. 'Yes: better than those boobies of priests you send here, my lord.' 'How many commandments are there?' 'Ten of God's, and seven of man, added by yourselves; for what reasons you know best.' Every thing shows that we ought to go on with this work.

Dr. Ryland. I shall not take up your time in testifying my approbation of the society. The measure of teaching to read in Irish was dictated by the soundest wisdom, and resulting in the best

effects. He would mention one or two instances. A few years back he conversed with a minister who had travelled in popish countries: when in Spain, he lost no opportunity of hearing the monks, as there was no preaching by archbishops, bishops, or parish priests. No sermon but in praise of some saint or ceremony. He had read a printed sermon which stated, that a man was sent to purgatory, and that the Virgin Mary scolded her Son, who sent orders to release him! Cotton Mather mentions the absurdities taught by Jesuits in Canada. A famous warrior of the Indians had been taken prisoner: who, when visited by a Protestant minister, desired to know the difference between the religion of priests and theirs: Cotton Mather took a tankard of beer which stood on the table, with a lid to it, and said, "The doctrine of Christ is like good drink, but Papists put poison into it: hence you run mad and fight; but we open the cup and show you the liquor—they shut down the lid, and expect you to drink it blindfold!" These priests had insinuated, to serve a political purpose, that Christ was a Frenchman, and that the English had crucified him. When they came to confession, they told them to bring a number of skins to the priest; but, on the contrary, the scripture represents salvation as without money and without price. This statement had such an effect upon the Indian's mind, that he exclaimed, "You shall be my father and teacher—I will spit out the French poison, all of it." Hence the Doctor inferred, that to give the scriptures in their own tongue was the best method.

Rev. J. Saffery had felt much pleasure in former years, and now still more, in seeing the company larger than ever. I have, said he, seen their cabins—conversed with them; but our worthy friend Rogers has done more. He has given you this morning proof that the society may expect much from him. I will tell you something of him, though he would not of himself. He has preached in the cabins, and notwithstanding all the privations he has endured, I am glad to hear his resolution to go back again. Mr. Rogers is not a native of Ireland but of Wales—he might have looked for a better situation, but had denied himself. Mr. Saffery congratulated Dr. Newman and his colleagues who had educated Mr. Rogers at Stepney. He hoped, if any of the students were there, they would imitate the example. Individuals may do much, but in this society is an example of the benefits of combination.

Benjamin Shaw, Esq. M. P.—After the impressive speeches and facts already delivered, I feel it would be of advantage if left to their own operation, rather than for me to intrude my opinion. But a motion being put into my hand, I will take an opportunity of bearing my testimony to the benefits not only conferred on Ireland, but on the empire at large. The motion put into my hands, refers to gentlemen who have left their pulpits, and employed their efforts for increasing the funds. I cannot ask you to consent to the motion without asking sanction to the object and mode of conducting this society. None who heard the Report but must feel satisfied; but while I look to the purpose and management, I also think of the success which has attended it. It is not in mortals to command success; though Paul may plant, and Apollós may water, God must give the increase. But in the regulations of providence, God is pleased to employ means, and surely these do not derogate from his sovereignty. One of the means has been already referred to, circulating the scriptures. It was worthy of the denomination of which the Christianizers of India is an ornament, to aim at the Christianization of Ireland also.

Rev. Mr. Wilkinson.—After what had been said, it would appear presumptuous in him to enlarge, but was urged to second a resolution. I cannot be satisfied without expressing the glow of heart I feel. Always proud of the name of Briton, but never so much as in the last hour. Mr. Rogers is a true Briton. Not long since I heard Mal. i. 11, discussed, but now I hear and see, and know it to be in actual operation. When the devil finds any good work going on, he will always oppose; but stronger is he that is for us, than all that are against us. Difficult as the work is, when I look on this company I will not despair—I look on the Chairman and mover and will not despair—I look upwards to the eternal throne and will not despair—when I think of the prayers daily offered I will not despair.

—Smith, Esq. an Irish barrister.—I shall not apologize for expressing my feelings. The impressive spectacle this morning rejoices a heart alive to the faintest hope of mental emancipation. Some time since, benevolent and indignant passions contended over Africa, till at length benevolence triumphed completely. You have led the forlorn hope of philanthropy, and planted the standard of divine truth on the batteries of superstition.

—Grierson, Esq. a native of Ireland, began by saying, I tell you your system

is not good. Pardon me if I do not flatter you. Every man for his own country, and I love my country. Your project of promoting the benefit of Ireland, by cultivating the language, has at least a romantic appearance. But Wales and Ireland are not similar—Wales had a prejudice against the language; this was wisely consulted: but this is not the case with Ireland; her population has no jealousy of you and your language! Establish English schools! send English Bibles! let them learn to speak the language of the senate and the throne. Learning is a material object of ambition. It is a grand and romantic plan, but I do not think it just. Make not Wales your example: check not the spirit of a rising nation.

J. Taylor, Esq. an Irish barrister.—Two years ago I addressed you; then no interruption took place from dissent as to the propriety of the means employed by this society. I have now a painful duty to perform, but before I proceed to answer my countryman, let me make some remarks on the general subject—Why is Ireland different from this country? Is it not the same constitution which protects us, and the same sovereign to whom we swear allegiance? The gentleman who spoke last, has not been in the south and west as I have;—had he been there instead of the east and north, he would have thought differently.—He knew it was the privilege of an Irishman to speak twice in England, and he had no doubt, if his friends permitted, he would retract all he had said.

[His eloquent speech, which fully answered all objections, must be deferred.]

Mr. Burls returned thanks, accepted the nomination of Treasurer, and hoped the company would give him employment. Had received 25*l.* annual interest of a bequest of 500*l.*; Edinburgh Bible Society, 50*l.*; Irvine, 5*l.*; West Jinton, 10*l.* and many other sums. Letter from *Dr. Rippon*, stating he could not attend, but said, "allow me to congratulate you, and receive 5*l.* 5*s.*"

Mr. Shenston communicated a letter from Sunday-school children, with a donation.

Rev. Dr. Newman moved that the thanks of the society be given to the Secretary, and requested him to continue his services for the next year. A very few words shall suffice. When I think of Popish superstition, I think of the Augean stable; thirty-nine years, they said, it would take to cleanse it. The fabled Hercules did it by turning a river through it. Let us turn a river through Ireland—a pure river of water of life!

I congratulate you on what God hath wrought. At one time, a clergyman could not read. If a Bible was found in an archbishop's palace, he could not read it. The archbishop of Mentz found a Bible; "I confess," said he, "I do not know what book it is, but it is all against us." Now it is found in the cabins of the Irish. I advert to the great object the society has in view. In the reign of Edward VI. [1549,] a great rebellion in Devonshire—they were longing for abbey religion again; 10,000 of them went into the fields with priests and a crucifix. "We will have the Bible in English called in again," said they, "otherwise the priests will not long confound the heretics." In his late bull, Pope Pius VII. flatly contradicts Pius VI. who recommended the scriptures to be read by the people. These cannot both be infallible!!

The *Rev. Mr. Ivimey* was quite willing to accept the office for another year. He said, whenever the Society could find another to do better, he would resign his commission, and let another man take his office.

Rev. Mr. Uppadine had hearkened to the reason, argument, and eloquence recited, till almost paralyzed; but hoped that faith and love and patience would yet hold out. How different the prospect of this society from that of which our Lord was the centre, when he looked down, and said, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often," &c.

Rev. Mr. Finch, of Lynn, seconded a motion, in a very animating and serious manner.

The *Rev. Mr. Winterbotham* was too much exhausted by felicity to go on long, but begged to be allowed to express his feelings. He never expected much till women were raised to their proper rank, and came forward in works of benevolence. Go on, lovely woman, in the career which nature has marked out for you. He said, he had never assisted the cause, but now presented a donation of 5*l.*

J. Gutteridge, Esq. would not detain them long at so late an hour. He would just read a motion—thanks to the chairman. With great propriety he might expatiate on the virtues of the worthy chairman. It was unnecessary to remind the company of his benevolence and sincere piety. We are honoured when members of the British legislature lay aside more public duties, and exemplify the text—"My kingdom is not of this world." A Christian is the highest style of man. In the Report we find "lions and beasts of savage name, put on the nature of

the Lamb." This, and similar societies, are leading to the glorious consummation, when the kingdoms of the Lord shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Dr. Moore, an Irish physician, seconded the motion, and expressed his hope that the glory of God would be the great object of this meeting, and this evinced by liberal donations.

J. Butterworth, Esq. in returning thanks, related an anecdote of a priest; who, in order to get a collection from his flock, told them the bridge out of purgatory was broken down. "Father," said they, "what must be done?" To which he replied, "A good collection must be made to repair it." Mr. B. intimated, how much more beneficial the subscription would be employed by this society.

The meeting concluded by singing,

"Praise God from whom all," &c.

The sum collected for the Irish mission during the week amounted to about £308 7s. 5d. Upwards of 500 took breakfast, and about 1000 attended. The meeting continued for nearly five hours, but the attention was maintained with vigour till the end.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE annual sermon was preached at St. Bride's-church, by the Rev. Daniel Wilson, on May the 6th. After which, the Society assembled at Freemasons'-hall, Lord Gambier in the chair. This was the seventeenth anniversary; and the Report stated, amongst other interesting particulars, that the income of the Society had this year increased 3000*l*. Their receipts amounting to 18,000*l*.; of which 15,000*l*. had been received from Auxiliary Societies: but that in consequence of the great calls on the Society from abroad, they had this year exceeded the last year's expenditure 2,000*l*.—a third of which had been expended on Western Africa.

The Bishop of Gloucester, the Rev. Messrs. Patterson, Thorpe, Bickersteth, Cunningham, Burn, and others, addressed the meeting. An anecdote of Mr. Bickersteth, who has visited the Society's schools and missions in Africa, is worth recording. He was disposed to try what effect the objection made by some to send the gospel to uncivilized barbarians would produce on the mind of a native; and therefore walking one night with a man named Richard, he said—"Richard, people in England

say, it is no use to send the gospel to such as you;" to which he replied, "O yes, massa, me walk here in the dark—me fall down—me break my arm—missionary come, put a candle in my hand, me walk down, and get home safely."

ASSOCIATION.

OXFORDSHIRE.

THIS Association was held at Burford, May 27 and 28, 1847. The meetings took place in the following order:

Tuesday Evening, half-past five o'clock.—Mr. S. Taylor read the scriptures, and prayed. Mr. Coles made some observations, introductory to the reading of the letters to the Association. Their contents were such as powerfully to excite emotions both of sympathy and gratitude, in every friend to Zion. Several of the churches have received pleasing accessions to their numbers; and in most of those which have not been so favoured, during the past year, expectations are entertained that, ere long, the desirable blessing will be afforded. The general tenor of these communications strongly enforces frequent and fervent prayer for the revival of religion in the hearts of its professors, and for the conversion of sinners. It is the earnest wish of the representatives of the churches, that all their brethren would keep these objects in view, in a more special manner, in all their secret and social prayers, as well as in the more public services of the sanctuary.

Mr. Hinton, after impressively urging some considerations derived from the letters, and from the present state of the church of Christ, in the increasing efforts employed for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, both at home and abroad, closed the interesting service by prayer.

Half-past eight.—Ministers and messengers met in the vestry. Application was made from the Baptist church at Cheltenham, for admission into the Association, and it was agreed to comply with the request.

Messrs. Coles and Gray made a report relative to the better regulation of the business of the Association, on which some Resolutions were passed, which were ordered to be inserted in the minutes of the Association.

Wednesday morning, half-past six.—Messrs. Herbert, of Boddicot; Wheeler, of Ensham; G. M. Smith, of Chipping-

Norton; and Bradley, engaged in prayer.

Eight o'clock.—Ministers and messengers met in the vestry; audited the accounts of the Association fund, and voted several sums, amounting to 68*l.* 19*s.* 4*d.*

Half-past ten.—Mr. Cook began the service by reading and prayer. Mr. Hinton offered the general prayer. Mr. Price preached from 1 Kings, xi. 11. Mr. Gray preached from Psalm cxxii. 9. Mr. Bicheno, of Coate, concluded in prayer.

After dinner.—Mr. Hinton called the attention of the company to the state of the Association fund, the collections of the present year having fallen short of the usual amount, and more numerous applications calling for renewed exertions on its behalf. The deficiencies were partly made up by liberal contributions, so as to permit nearly the usual sums to be sent to the most necessitous cases.

Evening, five o'clock.—Mr. H. H. Williams, of Cheltenham, prayed. Mr. J. Thomas, of Oxford, preached from Hebrews, ii. 10. Mr. Hinton communicated the most recent intelligence from our brethren in India, and closed in prayer.

Thursday morning, nine o'clock.—The circular letter, written by Mr. Bradley, was read, approved, and ordered to be printed: after which, the brethren who were able to stay, spent an hour in conversation and prayer.

The next circular letter to be drawn up by Mr. Price: subject, "The obligation and practical uses of Baptism and the Lord's-supper."

The Auxiliary Missionary Society will be held at Fairford, in September next, of which due notice will be given; and the Double Lecture will be at Eatonington, on Easter Tuesday, 1818.

The next Association will be held at Alcester, on Tuesday and Wednesday in the Whitsun week, 1818. Messrs. Taylor and Hinton to preach. or, in case of failure, Mr. Howlett. Put up at the Angel.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

Received on a	Dismissed.....	6
profession of	Dead	12
faith.....	Excluded	9
— by letter		
54		27
Increase 27.		

We have received some of the Association Letters, and request that all of them may be sent us.

NOTICES.

The annual meeting of the York and Lancaster assistant Baptist Missionary Society, which was intended to be held at Leeds, on the first Wednesday in August, is postponed till Thursday the 28th of that month.

The annual meeting of the Baptist mission will be held at Oxford on Wednesday, October 1. The Committee will meet at three o'clock the preceding day.

The quarterly meeting of the Hants and Wilts Association will be held at Romsey, on the 16th of July, instead of the 23d, as first appointed.

LIBERAL PROPOSALS.

AGREEABLY to the "LIBERAL PROPOSALS" of the "Mission House Correspondent," in the Magazine for the present month, two ladies have put into my hands "ten pounds" each, to be handed over to the Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society, as soon as it shall appear probable that *forty-seven* others have followed, or will follow, the worthy example set before them, for accomplishing the object proposed.

To be able to add to the above, either singly, or by several sums jointly, and that others may be encouraged to do likewise, will be no small gratification to

TIMOTHY THOMAS.

Islington, June 24, 1817.

N. B. Another person has presented 10*l.* for this object, since the above date.

IMPOSTOR!

MR. PRYCE, of Falmouth, wishes us to say, that a man begging about the country, with his name to attest his case, is an impostor. This man has also been in London, and among other names we remember that of the Rev. Mr. Dyer, of Reading.

TO OUR READERS.

THE Proprietors of the Magazine regret having to state, that, notwithstanding the increase of their readers, they find it necessary to discontinue the gift of a Portrait every month. They had hoped that the profits would have equalled the advanced expense; but as this has not been realized, they trust that their numerous readers will confide in the discretion of the Proprietors, to give a Portrait so often as they can do it without injury to the widows for whom the funds are exclusively provided. They intend to present them with a Portrait of the Rev. Mr. Ward, of Serampore, in the Magazine for September next, engraved by Branwhite, from an original painting.